MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#320 JANUARY 2010
$4 US/CANADA

TOP TEN OF THE DECADE

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COMPLICATIONS

CONTROL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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179-181, 184, 186-197, 199, 204, 206, 208-215, 218, 221-225, 227, 229-236, 238-247, 249-306, 308-319

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- VOCO PROTESTA-Vojo Al Libereco-LP
- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Introducing-LP
- SILLA ELECTRICA-Tension-EP
- SYSTEM FUCKER-What Is Freedom?-EP
- ABORTTI 13-Viimeinen Verilöyly-EP
- NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR-Total Annihilation-EP
- IRON LUNG-Exposed-one-sided EP
- IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP
- SCROTUM POLES-Auchmithie Forever-LP

TIM BROOKS

- GERIATRIC UNIT-Permethrin Blues-LP
- COPROLITOS-Miss Melilla-EP
- IMPEDIMENTS-LP
- VOCO PROTESTA-Vojo Al Libereco-LP
- MORNE-Untold Wait-LP
- TOTAL CONTROL-Retiree/Meds II-45
- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- SILLA ELECTRICA-Tension-EP
- SYSTEM FUCKER-What Is Freedom?-EP
- HORROR-Spoils Of War-LP

ROBERT COLLINS

- KRIEGHÖG/PISSCHRIST-live
- FRAMTID/CROW-live
- COSMIC NEUROSE/ANGEL OD-live
- R.A.G.S./ABRAHAM CROSS-live
- ORdER/CLOWN-live
- UG MAN/VAV-live
- FLIPOUT AA/DESPERDICIO-live
- UK SUBS/HEARTWORK-live
- MASAKARI/BREAKFAST-live
- IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP

LAYLA GIBBON

- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Introducing-LP
- COPROLITOS-EP / SILLA ELECTRICA-EP
- RAINCOATS-LP
- SCROTUM POLES-Auchmithie Forever-LP
- IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP
- FACE THE RAIL-LP / WHITE SHIT-10"
- VOCO PROTESTA-Vojo Al Libereco-LP
- V/A-Nacido Para Estobar-LP / SCREAMERS-LP
- CONSERVANTES ADULTERADOS/LOS NIÑATOS-split EP

BOB GOLDIE

- RIP IT UP/STRESSED OUT-split EP
- A BRIDGE TOO MANY-Weights-EP
- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- ESTRANGED-Type Foundry Session I-LP
- NIGHT FEVER-New Blood-LP
- SOCIAL CIRCKLE-City Shock-LP
- NORTH LINCOLN-Sick of Sorrys-LP
- CREEPS/FEAR OF LIPSTICK-split EP
- CRACKS-Dirty Floor-EP
- MINUS APES-It's All the Same-EP

KENNY KAOS

- LOVE COLLECTOR-My Baby Goes Woah!-EP
- MOJOMATICS-Another Cheat On Me-45
- NODZZZ-True To Life/Good Times Crowd-45
- THE NYMPHETS-I See-EP
- THE MOBY DICKS-Ballad of the Red Dog-EP
- IMPEDIMENTS-LP
- THE CRUMBS/THE RIDICULES-split EP
- HARRINGTON SAINTS-Dead Broke-LP
- SHARP ENDS-Crack Trap/Loaded Hearts-45
- BORED GAMES-Party 'Til You Puke-10"

CAROLYN KEDDY

- BRILLIANT COLORS-Introducing-LP
- SHARP ENDS-both-45s
- DADFAG-Scenic Abuse-CD
- WIZZARD SLEEVE-LP
- V/A-Fresh Cuts and Cigarette Burns-EP
- USELESS CHILDREN-Sky Is Falling-LP
- SCROTUM POLES-LP / THE RAINCOATS-LP
- JACK OBLIVIAN/JPK & THE 145s/SECTOR ZERO-live
- THE MUMMIES/BUDGET ROCK #8-live
- THE SAINTS-(I'm) Stranded-DVD

VINNIE LARUSSA

- IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP
- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- HHH-Sin Identidad/Intelectual Punks-LP
- CONSERVANTES ADULTERADOS/LOS NIÑATOS-split EP
- SYSTEM FUCKER-What Is Freedom?-EP
- MUDLARK-LP
- TOTAL CONTROL-Retiree/Meds II-45
- IRON LUNG-Exposed-one-sided EP
- NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR-Total Annihilation-EP
- VOCO PROTESTA-Vojo Al Libereco-LP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

PAUL LUCICH

- ESTRANGED-Type Foundry Session I-LP
- COPROLITOS-Miss Melilla-EP
- BANNER PILOT-Pass the Poison-LP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Introducing-LP
- THE RAINCOATS-LP
- NODZZZ-True To Life/Good Times Crowd-45
- GOODNIGHT LOVING-Nothing Conquers Us-45
- GET BENT-Dead It-EP
- FISCHER/GHOSTLIMB-split 10"
- SCROTUM POLES-Auchmithie Forever-LP

RAY LUJAN

- AMBER JETS/VELOCITY-split EP
- CONCRETE GODS-Emire Club-CD
- GOODNIGHT LOVING-Nothing Conquers Us-45
- FUNGI GIRLS-Seafaring Pyramids-LP
- LIPONA-Pigeonholed-CD
- HIDDEN SPOTS-Hundred Million Voices-LP
- NO FRIENDS-LP
- OUT ON A LIMB-EP / THE NYMPHETS-EP
- HARRINGTON SAINTS-Dead Broke-LP
- SMALLTOWN / OFF WITH THEIR HEADS-live

MARK MURRMANN

- THE MOBY DICKS-Ballad of the Red Dog-EP
- V/A-Fresh Cuts and Cigarette Burns-EP
- GOODNIGHT LOVING-Nothing Conquers Us-45
- SCREAMERS-Live At Mabuhay Gardens-LP
- MOJOMATICS-Another Cheat On Me-45
- BUDGET ROCK #8
- IMPEDIMENTS-LP
- V/A-You Weren't There-LP
- YOUNG LIONS-From The Vaults-LP
- HOMOSTUPIDS-The Load-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- COCKSPARRER/REDUCERS SF/HARRINGTON SAINTS-live
- SOCIAL CIRCKLE-City Shock-LP
- CONTROL-Hooligan Rock'n'Roll-LP
- FACE THE RAIL-LP
- BORED STRAIGHT/NORDIC WASTE/HOLY SHIT!-split EP
- A BIT OF BRAIN DEAD-Totally Wrecked-EP
- HARRINGTON SAINTS-LP / NITAD-EP
- RAZORS IN THE NIGHT-10"
- GERIATRIC UNIT-Permethrin Blues-LP
- HHH-Sin Identidad/Intelectual Punks-LP

FRED SCHRUNK

- SILLA ELECTRICA-Tension-EP
- COPROLITOS-Miss Melilla-EP
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Funny-EP
- HIDDEN SPOTS-Hundred Million Voices-LP
- THE RAINCOATS-LP
- ESTRANGED-Type Foundry Session I-LP
- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- BORED GAMES-Party 'Til You Puke-10"
- HOMOSTUPIDS-The Load-LP
- LEGENDARY SAN DIEGO CHARGERS/SUNNYSIDE-split EP

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- NEEDLES-Desastre-EP
- SYSTEM FUCKER-What Is Freedom?-EP
- VOCO PROTESTA-Vojo Al Libereco-LP
- SILLA ELECTRICA-Tension-EP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Introducing-LP
- IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP
- MORNE-Untold Wait-LP
- V/A-Nacido Para Estobar-LP
- FACE THE RAIL-LP
- CONSERVANTES ADULTERADOS/LOS NIÑATOS-split EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- SILLA ELECTRICA-Tension-EP
- SOCIAL CIRCKLE-City Shock-LP
- V/A-Nacido Para Estobar-LP
- VOCO PROTESTA-Vojo Al Libereco-LP
- V/A-You Weren't There-LP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Introducing-LP
- ABORTTI 13-Viimeinen Verilöyly-EP
- SYSTEM FUCKER-What Is Freedom?-EP
- COPROLITOS-Miss Melilla-EP
- CONSERVANTES ADULTERADOS/LOS NIÑATOS-split EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Distort #23*
- *Wet Cement #1*
- *Achtung #1*
- *Alta Intensidaz #5*
- *The Great Myspace Swindle*
- *Counterfeit Garbage #2*
- *Repercussion*
- *Violin Outbreak #16*
- *Publick Occurances #12*
- *Failsafe – August 2009*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waiffle, Flat Earth Recs.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948." Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs,. Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet. J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Djskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbomas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stälag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#307/December '08. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue. with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joeseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

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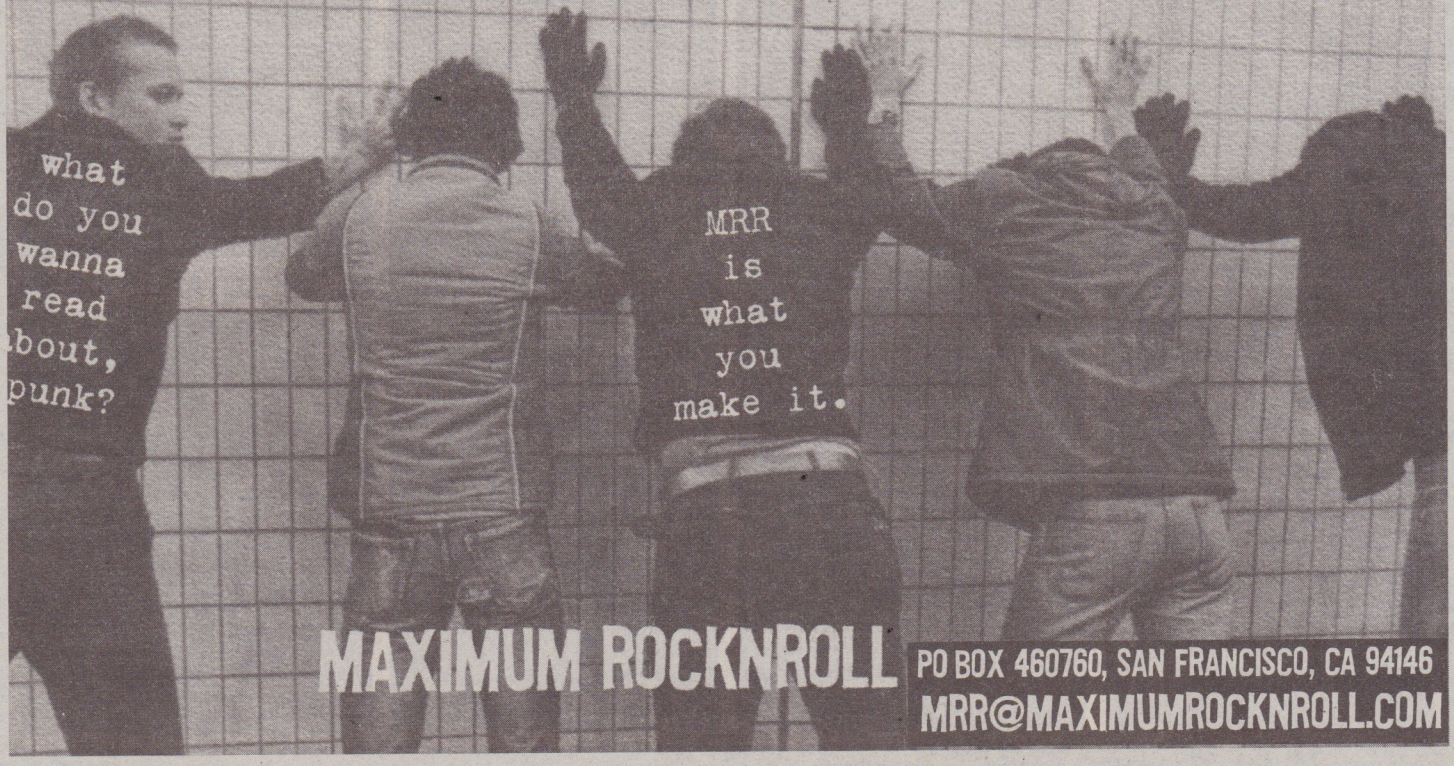

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—

Readers will recall that Logan Dean Worrell's column, "Walking on Water," in the December issue, was an extended attack on Christianity. It is all too true that Christianity has no place in punk; that punk, if it means anything, involves a rejection of the age-old and inert values of organized religion. I will even take it further and say that some vague "spirituality" is just as bad. Punk is concerned with the here and now, and not the infinite beyond, or life after death. The Germs are much more eloquent about this than either Logan or I can be (in the song "No God").

What I am writing about is the unfortunate consequence of this mutual exclusion (punks can't be Christian, Christians can't be punks). As Logan puts it, we are left with a choice between punk, which in his case he admits is "not very smart," and between Christians, who are "stupid." Now, I can name some smart people who were Christian. Martin Luther King, Jr. would be a good example. Also the OG Martin Luther. In fact, probably every intelligent person in Europe for 1700 years was Christian, or Jewish, or Muslim. It is only very recently that intelligent people have not been religious! Certainly the Jewish people could not have survived for millennia without their privileging of religious knowledge and religious traditions. Logan also tells us that he has "serious issues with Hindus." It is difficult for me to imagine that these issues are of a very serious or well-informed nature. If what he means is that his Western mind has overcome the primitive and magical fantasies in which persons of a different color skin are still "mired," this struggle against superstition was not an arduous triumph of Logan's will. Atheism is easy and ready-to-hand in our Western culture, and arriving at the punk position on religion does not require much work. It certainly does not suggest a superior mind.

Religion—even Christianity—is more complex than Logan imagines, and since the history of religion is in many ways the history of the world, deserves more thought than Logan invites us to give. For example, in the black community in America, religion has played a more constructive and complicated role than we find in Logan's statement, "Christians are the new Nazis." I would also cite the revolutionary and profound thought of Malcolm X, an American Muslim. It is a fact that many of the struggles against American global hegemony today are taking the form of religious fervor. We should be more circumspect.

As Karl Marx wrote—and he certainly was one of the most pronounced atheists of all time!!—"To call on the people to give up their religious illusions is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions." In other words, religion is a historical consequence which is dependent upon the state of the world. If Logan, in Texas in 2009, is an atheist, that too is a consequence of our society, and not entirely due to his heroic striving for reason in all things. Religious people are not idiots. But we all become idiots the second we begin to assign to the great complexity of the world the substanceless caricatures of religion which we have invented from our punk enclave.

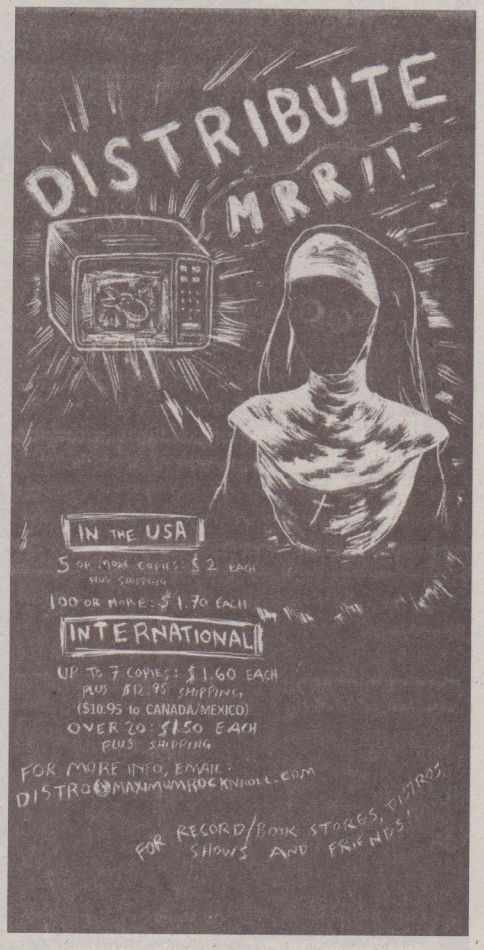
Best regards,
—Ben Parker

Dear MRR—

I regret to inform you that the founding member of one of the earliest Siberian punk bands had died. Yevgeniy "John Double" Deyev died in Omsk on October 29, 2009. In 1982 he co-founded POSEV with Yegor Letov and Andrei Babenko, which later morphed into GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA. In 1988 Deyev recorded an album with Letov and G.O. guitarist Kuzya Uo, credited to POGRANICHNIY OTRYAD GRAZHDANSKOY OBORONY (P.O.G.O.) and took part in one of GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA live lineups as a bassist. He also played in legendary Omsk-based garage band KLAKSON GAM. Deyev died of liver cirrhosis, and the money for the funeral was gathered by his friends. The very early Soviet punk generation is dying out, e.g. Oleg "Manager" Sudakov is the only member of the aforementioned GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA lineup still alive...
Here's the source of the information with a few photos:
community.livejournal.com/ru_tape/1380261.html
Kick out the jams, brothers and sisters.
—Szarapow
St. Petersburg, Russia
diyhc@yahoo.com

Dear MRR—

Did you hear? All of the punks are going to Mardi Gras next year. Tuesday February 16th all punks go to Mardi Gras. All the punks go to St Louis a few years back was a good idea, but this is a betterr one.
See you in New Orleans.
—Zach London
Albany, NY



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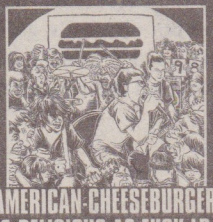

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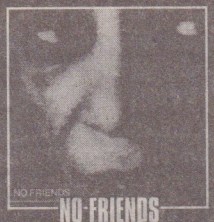

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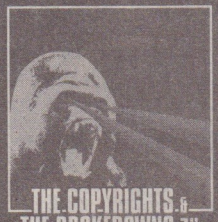

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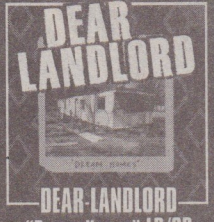

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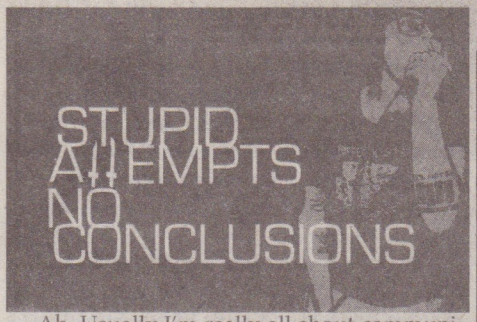


Ah. Usually I'm really all about community and tolerance and support, but once in awhile, I'll read some smirky masterpiece talking shit about both everything I hate (like "dimbulb reviewers" reviewing lady-fronted bands and using "incongruous comparisons (Bikini kill, Avengers) or inappropriate descriptions ("sexy growl?????"), but also tears into everything I like. It's true, my favorite bands have "parlayed social connection, schtick, and fairly base talent/songwriting into a modest "career" based on being flown to shows and probably really are the "Kanye West of hardcore/punk." I get it: Hardcore sucks and so do I. Fuck.

I'm talking about *Endless Disappointment* out of Toronto, arty design and spiteful as shit. I tracked down Jacquie to ask her some questions.

Juls: What's this about your zine getting bashed at Fucked Up Fest?

Jacquie: Not sure, but I love to be hated. I got the mic at the Cro-Mags after-party set. That ruled.

Juls: What do you hate the most right now?

Jacquie: Girls that blog about their pathetic lives. Guess what fuck face? No one gives a shit.

Juls: Is there anything that doesn't suck about Toronto right now?

Jacquie: My home-brewed cider and Steve Goof's (Bunchafuckingoofs) after-hours punk bar.

Juls: Are you playing in any bands right now?

Jacquie: It is in the works.

Juls: What bands have you played in in the past?

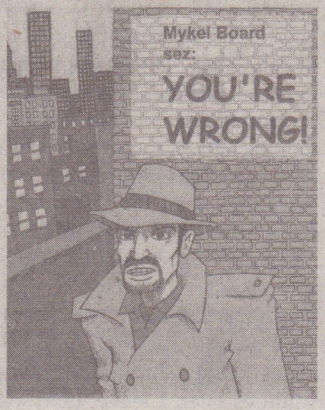
Jacquie: Nothing worth mentioning.

Juls: What's the big half-tone dot picture on "the cover"?

Jacquie: I took the picture in a dilapidated shed out in the "white" part of Scarborough. The owner, a 50 something year old, racist, ex-biker that looks more like he is in his 70s complete with a hunchback, a ratty ponytail, and leathered skin from years or drug use and alcoholism. The kind of person I aspire to be really. He was growing pot over the summer and offered me bud in exchange for helping him trim the dried goods down. We drank beers, smoked J's, I got my pot and then I started shooting some psychedelic multi-exposed images on a medium format camera. Essentially, it's a still life of memorabilia from the man's life. A 1972 Canadian hockey championship t-shirt, a noose, a balaclava for those cold Canadian days, and of course, lots of dope drying out in the background. It's a better photo in color really.

Juls: Where can the general public order *Endless Disappointment*?

Jacquie: The first issue was a limited run of 75 screen-printed copies. I have a handful of them left. If you need to have one, email me at jacquiesmollan@gmail.com. There are a couple copies at the Toronto zine library. Keep your eyes peeled for issue two around the New Year.



If you want to make God laugh,tell him your plans. —Junot Diaz

Albanians do not eat. I don't understand it yet, but I've been in this country for two weeks now. Maybe I'll have it figured out by the time I leave.

Yeah Albania. Country of Mother Theresa and John Belushi. A land where the people are not quite like either one of those.

I write this part of the column sitting in Saranda, in a $20 a night hotel. It's 6 a.m. I went to bed at eight last night with a headache like I've never had before. A grinding split from my nose to the back of my neck. Three lines. One down the middle of my head. One on each side, where a part would be, if had I enough hair to part. It was like a double migraine. So severe I wanted to puke. I would've if I'd eaten anything.

Every town in this country has dozens of outdoor cafés. In each of them, tables full of men (mostly men), drink coffee from tiny cups. In the evening, they drink beer or raki—a kind of grape vodka. They don't eat. There are restaurants, pizza parlors and places with "fast food" signs on them, in English. No one eats in them. They just drink coffee.

It's weird, but only one of the many mysteries of this country, the least visited place in Europe. But this column will not be a mystery, it will be a tale. A true tale, written fittingly in the month of Halloween.

The tale starts in Vlora, a city about 100 miles up the coast from here. I wanted to come here directly from Vlora, but by the time I woke up, all the buses to Saranda had left. My only choice was to go to Himara, about halfway. That bus doesn't leave from the regular bus station, but one a bit out of town. I can get there by taxi. No problem.

(My guidebook lists *S'ka problem!* as Albanian for "No problem." It also has this note: *Often turns out to mean there is a problem.*)

The bus leaves at 1 p.m. It's now nine o'clock.

"Is there anything I can do at the bus station for some hours?" I ask the hotel concierge.

She nods. "There is nothing there," she says.

(Oh yeah, I forgot to mention: Albanians nod when they mean *no*, and shake their heads to mean *yes*.)

The concierge makes a plan for me: take a walk, return to the hotel and eat lunch in the hotel restaurant at eleven. Then, after lunch, take a taxi to the bus terminal. I'll be there in plenty of time.

Maybe that's why I don't see people eat. They have lunch at 11 a.m. Maybe dinner at four o'clock. Who expects people to be eating at those times?

Nope, that's not it either.

I walk along the beach for a little bit and sit to watch a bulldozer push the plastic garbage around. I go to the post office and mail some

postcards.

At eleven, I return to the hotel and go to the restaurant. It's empty, though the door is open. A heavyset woman mops the floor.

Une dua te ha ditchka. (I want to eat something) I say. She tsks once and motions for me to sit down. I'm the only one in the place.

I ask for the menu. She brings it to me and stands over me while I decide what to eat. It's my first meal of the day. The menu has beefsteak, fish a la hoity toidy, pizza, pasta. Not exactly breakfast. I order a salad and a mineral water.

"Vetem salata?" (Only a salad?) asks the waitress, clearly meaning *You disturbed me, made me open the kitchen and neglect my cleaning duties for a salad? What's wrong with you?*

"Vetem salata." I reply.

It turns out that the salad is enough. It's weird, but on this trip I have less of an appetite than I do in New York. I drink more beer here, but eat a lot less. I wonder if I'm going to lose weight.

My stomach is strange, as it always is when traveling. It suddenly clenches, in extreme pain. A rush to the bathroom cleans me out, and I'm good for the rest of the day. After my salad, come the clenches.

I have a long bus trip ahead. So after I pay the bill, I'll clean myself out, and be ready for the ride to Himara.

I stand to signal that I'm finished. The waitress comes to me, collects my money and through the open restaurant door walks a burly guy wearing a black and white knit sweater. He walks right up to me.

"Taxi bussi Himara," he says grabbing my bags. "We go."

So, me, my stomachache and I are off to the bus station. It's just a space on the side of a street out of town. It's barely big enough for one bus. I get in the only bus there.

The driver takes my backpack out of the bus and puts it someplace I can't see. I'm the only passenger, but not for long. People arrive about fifteen minutes before the scheduled leaving time. Lots of people.

One of the first is an older guy. About my height, he wears a typical Albanian tan straw hat. He has a worn-but-clean tweed jacket, and black slacks. His eyes are deep-set, and half closed, like they've seen too much. He sits in an empty seat, the one behind mine. He taps me on the shoulder and I turn to face him. His eyes are watery—not sad watery—but sick watery. One of them doesn't look exactly in the same direction as the other. He says something to me in Albanian.

"Une nuk flac sqip," I say. (I don't speak Albanian.)

He shrugs, then motions for me to come and sit next to him. I do. It's not long before I begin to fear that is a mistake.

The bus leaves about a half hour past schedule.

With very few words, *the guy* speaks to me: some Italian, some Greek, some Albanian... but mostly sign language... like he's done it hundreds of times before.

He asks me where I'm from: *New York.*

Where I'm going: *Himara.*

Where I'm staying in Himara. (He puts his hands together and tilts his head on them. Then closes his eyes meaning "place you sleep.") *I don't know,* I shrug.

You (he points to me). *Sleep* (the sleeping gesture again.) *My place.* He points to himself, makes a little house-like triangle with his fingers, and then the sleeping gesture again.

I know. I know. I must be crazy to say yes. But I'm sick of hotels, and Albania is supposed to be safe and small-town people are always friendlier than city people, right? I shake my head in agreement.

There's not much more to say as we ride along. Once he taps me on the shoulder and makes a straight-ahead motion, then up and down, as if he's explaining the torturous mountain road ahead.

I say *koptoj* (I understand). But maybe I don't.

During the next hour or so, I look at him every once in awhile. I'm trying for human contact. A smile or something. There is nothing. He looks straight ahead, eyes half closed as in worry, or very serious thought. Sometimes he looks at his knees. His forehead furls. I begin to feel uneasy.

After about two hours of silence, the bus pulls into the Albanian equivalent of a highway rest-stop.

It's a small mountain restaurant called: *Bego*

The bus empties. Most everybody goes inside to eat. A few have a smoke first, then join those of us inside. *The guy* stays outside. He walks around. He does not smoke. He just walks, looking at the ground most of the time. Sometimes he does something with his hands, but I can't see what it is.

I eat a simple rice dish and have some water. As I finish, *the guy* walks in and sits at my table.

Juu doni te ha ditchka? ("You want to eat something?") I ask.

He smiles weakly, shrugs and leaves again. A few minutes later, I leave, take some pictures of the restaurant, then get back in the bus. *The guy* looks at me without smiling and pats the seat next to him.

We take off, going up and down mountainsides, hairpin turns. The way buses in the mountains always do.

I look at *the guy* and smile. He doesn't smile. He looks at his hands. In them now are rosary beads. He's running them through his fingers. Squinting in something between worry and sorrow. *Now,* I understand. I begin to read his thoughts.

Forgive me Mother Mary for what I am about to do. I know it is evil and against your ways, but I must. I have no choice. This is my life. You know me, Mother Mary. I know it is wrong to take a life. To inflict so much pain, spill so much blood. But I must. You know that, Mother Mary, don't you? I pray for forgiveness.

The beads run through his fingers, one after the other, until they run out at the cross. Then, he starts again.

The bus stops to pick up some school children. They look somehow *off.* Especially the boys. High foreheads and small jaws. And they're quiet. Ages that from six to ten... and quiet. It's spooky. Like *Children of the Damned.* They don't stay on the bus very long.

We pass a road sign. *5km to Himara.* Somehow, that's a relief, even though I don't know what I'm in for once we get there.

When we reach Himara, most passengers get off. We do not.

An old woman, wearing all black, with a black babushka, gets on the bus. *The guy* excuses himself and talks to her. She glances at me, a sad look on her face. Then, he shoos me to the window and sits down on the aisle seat, blocking my exit.

The bus closes its doors and heads out of the city.

The guy taps me on the shoulder and points to the woman. Then to a ring on his finger. I guess that means she's his wife. They sure don't act very friendly. Maybe she doesn't approve of what he feels he has to do. I look at her. She does not look at me.

For the next quarter hour, he's back to his rosaries.

In the middle of a hill, the bus doors open and the women gets out. The only two people left are *the guy* and me. A little further, the bus stops. The end of the line. *The guy* gets out. Me too, retrieving my pack from the back.

Then we walk. Through a little opening in the wall. Down a long street. Through a tunnel, twisting and turning following a gravel path, through a ditch. Turn here. There's a staircase, probably built by the Romans, or the ancient Greeks. They'll never find the body in a place like this.

Will I be slowly tortured in the basement? Tied to a cross like Jesus? Helpless. *The guy* wraps his rosary around my balls and asks Mother Mary for forgiveness before he bites them off. Will it be quick? Have a seat. I'll be right back. *Pow!* Between the eyes. Will he drug me? Then do things to my unconscious body before slitting my throat, severing my head, and boiling it for dinner?

Finally, we end up at a building that overlooks the sea, sheer cliffs to the rocks below. *The guy* brings me to a room that has glass doors and enters from a balcony—like a motel. The room has two beds, a small unplugged refrigerator, a sink, cabinets, and a bathroom. It's almost like a hotel room.

The guy takes a plastic table and a couple

chairs from *my room*. He motions for me to sit down. Then he walks away. While he's gone, I run my eyes over the tile floor and plaster walls, looking for bloodstains, stray pieces of flesh. There's a dark spot. Some discoloration along the wall. I wonder who that was.

He returns with some coffee, some strange looking fruit, and a bottle of water. I see by the plastic ring that the bottle has been opened, and then refilled. I'm sure it's drugged. I don't drink from that bottle.

The coffee is delicious, though. Turkish style, made by boiling water, and coffee grounds together and pouring the mixture into a cup. After you drink it, it leaves a thick black sludge on the bottom of the cup. Heavily sugared, it's the best.

It's hard to find real Turkish coffee in New York. The first time I had it was in the former Yugoslavia, with a friend whose mother read coffee grounds like old gypsies read tea leaves. I wish she could read my future now.

"Kafé Turke?" I ask.

He nods, "Kafé Grek! No Turke!"

Yowsah, some rivalries die hard.

Then he asks if I'm married, do I have kids. All the things that will tell him how much the world will miss me when I'm gone. He's relieved when I say I have neither.

He asks how long I'm planning to stay. An encouraging sign. If he were going to kill me, why would he care?

I tell him two nights.

He shakes his head. I realize it's a trick. Something to make me feel more at ease.

Then he asks me if I want a shower, *Douche*, he uses the Italian/French word.

Uh oh, here it comes. Get me naked and the fun can begin.

"Yo, falaminderet" (No thank you) I say, shivering to show it's too cold to bathe.

Actually, it's unbelievably cold. In Italy, and the first two days in Albania, it was summer. When I got to Vlora I bought a bathing suit, a $30 Armani—the only one they had left—for the beaches in the south. Then came the rain and since then, cold. Now, it feels barely above freezing. My Inspector Gadget hat and coat are not enough to keep the chill out, especially at night.

It's about 9 p.m. *The guy* wishes me good night and I open the glass doors and enter the room. I try not to think about what will happen later. I try not to think about how none of it makes sense in any other way than *murder*.

If he was just being generous, why didn't he take me inside and introduce me to his wife? Why didn't he offer me a little family? Why the lack of smiles? The questions about who will miss me?

Inside the little room is so cold that I wrap myself in the only blanket and sit with the computer, typing this, photo-shopping my travel pictures, playing spider solitaire, planning as if there were going to be a tomorrow.

It's then I notice that the glass doors to the room—the only entrance and the only escape—lock from the outside. Only the outside. What kind of place is this? What hotel has rooms that only lock from the outside? What house?

About 9:30, I go to sleep, fully clothed, wrapped tightly in that blanket. Outside, a dog barks incessantly. But it's not the dog that keeps me awake. I'm freezing. I wonder how much of the shaking is from the actual cold, and how much is from fear. I shake like the flu chills. Shake like there's no tomorrow. Shake waiting for the sound of bursting into the room with guns or machetes. Or worse, the sound of a key turning in the lock outside.

ENDNOTES: [Subscribers to this column can receive live links and a chance to discuss the content with Mykel. Subscribe with an email to: god@mykelboard.com. You can check out my travel blog with pictures at mykelsdiary.blogspot.com. My Albanian pictures are parked in Picasa. You can get to them from the picture link on my website www.mykelboard.com]

--Squirreling away the ACORNs dept: The US government has blocked funding for ACORN, a voter registration and poverty assistance group. Why? A pair of conservatives dressed up like a whore and pimp asked them for help. After being rejected a couple of times, one person in ACORN gave them advice. Can you imagine?

Meanwhile, the US still buys from Haliburton, Dick Cheny's company, that received $80 million in government funds for electricity in Iraq. That wiring electrocuted several US soldiers. The US also still pays Blackwater, the company that murdered Iraqi civilians... and has some members on trial for murder. Which is worse, murder or whoring? You know which Obama has chosen.

--Virtual death/really dead dept: The Nation reports that, in China, courts gave Qui Chengwei a suspended death sentence for fatally stabbing someone over a piece of property that didn't even exist. Qui and his victim, Zhu Caoyuan, were players in the Chinese game *Legend of Mir II*.

Qui and a friend had jointly won a valuable Dragon Sabre by battling through a tough quest. The pair lent it to Zhu who, instead of returning it, sold it via an online auction, kept the money (about $900) and ran. Chinese police don't recognize virtual property as real goods, so technically there was no theft. There was, however, murder.

Nerd crime shows a lot about capitalism in general. By creating the *need* for something—even if it doesn't exist—you get people to buy it. And cheat and kill for it.

It also bodes well for the future. Maybe those on-line gamer types will just take care of themselves. A world without Bill Gates or Steve Jobs. Isn't that a dream come true?

--Whoops dept: The Investor's Business Daily wrote about the evils of a national health plan: *People such as scientist Stephen Hawking wouldn't have a chance in the UK where the National Health Service would say the life of this brilliant man, because of his physical handicaps, is essentially worthless.*

Hawking actually lives in England and said, "I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for the National Health Service. I have received a large amount of high-quality treatment without which I would not have survived."

--Not a sick joke dept: the *Times-News* of Hendersonville, North Caroline reports that state officials have advised visitors to their county fair to wash their hands *before* entering the fair. They are afraid that humans might spread swine flu to the swine.

Hola amigos, I know it's been a while since I last rapped at ya, but I been busy. See, I heard a rumor from my buddy Jim that the HOMOSTUPIDS new LP *The Load* was actually about to be released after a long year of waiting. So I figured I would cash-in on my *MRR* press credentials and get this Load Records label (who obviously decided to name themselves after this soon-to-be-classic album) to send me a promo copy. Because if there's anything I love more than free weed, it's free records. So I have Jim track down the number of this record label and we borrow my sister's cell phone and call the dude who runs it. So, after a fifteen fucking minute explanation of who I am and convincing the guy that *Maximum Rocknroll* is an actual magazine and not some stupid web-log or whatever, he agrees to send me a copy gratis. And while we have the phone, Jim decides he's gonna call his buddy Melvin, who grows weed down in Ocala and gets him to send some "promotional samples" of this season's "releases" as well. So you know after those calls, we're fucking planted in my apartment watching the fucking mailbox like hawks for the next week. Some real stake-out shit. I think Vince (my mailman and occasional drinking partner) knew something was up when I would be there standing on the porch when he showed up every afternoon. Shit, I usually let the mail pile up for a couple days before I even think about grabbing that pile of crap. So anyway, after like seven fucking media mail hell days I get *The Load* and practically cut my thumb off trying to open the

fucking box as quick as I can. I think you can understand the rush when America's greatest current rock band's second LP is awaiting your ears. This thing starts out so fucking blazing, I even forgot that we hadn't got the package with "The Green" in yet, if you know what I'm sayin'. "Raw Nightums" and "The Hawk" are both songs I recognize from various live sets and they are further extrapolations of their already highly successful formula for rocking your fucking dick right in the dirt. Raw, punk shit. I couldn't be happier with this fucking thing, it continues on in impressive fashion, a little bit weirder than The Intern, but still giving me the energy to wake up and immediately want to put this on and mosh it up with my dog Larry in the living room every morning. And I kinda think they got one of those guys from the FACTORYMEN to play on a few songs, because a couple of these tracks are way out there. But whether they're playing the punk music, redoing their old tunes or jacking off on tape, the HOMOSTUPIDS are better than any other stupid punk band this world has to offer. Buy *The Load* and step into the fucking ring or snap into a Slim Jim or some shit like that. I am down as fuck with this record. I'm kinda wondering where that fucking weed is now though. (www.loadrecords.com)

Speaking of drugs, one of the records I was listening to a lot while waiting for *The Load* to arrive was the debut LP from Alabama synth-punkers WIZZARD SLEEVE called *Make The World Go Away*. Firstly, I'm shocked dudes from Alabama know how to work synthesizers. I thought they were still trying to figure out how to work eight-track players down there, but apparently some of these guys are ahead of the curve. And you know me, I'm no fan of synthesizers getting all up in my peanut butter, but these guys do it with real class and feeling. No beep-boop fancy-boy Casio crap here, these are real organic synths, all analog and shit, deep and full of tone and texture and lacing these joints with a real psychedelic edge. Honestly, this is some real drugged-out stuff, dark and dank, the perfect soundtrack to grow some sick mushrooms to. Good vox as well, this guy is confident enough to not hide his shit under layers of warble and distortion and just spit his lyrics out plain and simple. Like I said, pretty dark, quite evil really, and one of the best full lengths I've heard all year. Do not be put off by the synth-punk tag, this is real deal rock! (www.hozacrecords.com)

While we're talking about weird-type rock here, let me tell you about the FACTUMS new LP on Sacred Bone's simply called Flowers. I was a little down on this band after that bunk "soundtrack" LP they released last year put me to sleep on multiple occasions, but this one really clobbered me right in the dome. It's jam-packed with songs, a few of the more soundtrack-y variety, but hey, I like small doses of that stuff. But it's the actual rock songs they do that are so great this time around. Slices of weird INTELLIGENCE-styled pop, A-FRAMES-ish post-rock, nasty noise-rock cuts, dreamy NZ-like passages, fuck one song even sounds like the fuggin STOOGES! And in a delightful little tidbit, they sort of cover fucking SOD. Color me impressed. I'd seek this one out for late night gaming/toking sessions before it's sold out. As usual, there's a deluxe edition of the vinyl that is nicer than my apartment. Fuck. (www.sacredbonesrecords.com)

Everyone needs to mellow out sometimes, and I'm not exempt from that rule. When I like to turn things down a notch or two from punksville, yet still keep rockin' as the name of the game, I always turn to those modern masters REIGNING SOUND. And aside from their new LP as a band, GREG CARTWRIGHT also has a solo record of sorts out. Recorded live at an acoustic performance he did in Milwaukee, *Live at the Circle A* is a wonderful rip through the Cartwright catalog, tastefully done as you might imagine, and with a real heartfelt vibe. You actually feel like you're there, it's quite intimate, yet solidly recorded as well. Perfect for those afternoons when you need a little pick-me-up from a guy who I consider one of the better songsmiths of our generation. And it even comes with a bonus 7" with tracks he recorded with those kids in GOODNIGHT LOVING in a clever mock-Goner sleeve. For pure song-for-song value this thing is already a steal, but that's extra touch is gravy lovingly poured on by label honcho Dusty Mistreater, an endless dude in his own right. Buy this or burn in hell. (www.dustymedical.com)

And while we're getting mellow, let's talk about THEE OH SEES. Yes, again. Honestly, I'm surprised I don't hate this band by now with the amount of wax they've been funneling down the pipeline, but I gotta tell the truth. Their new LP *Dog Poison* on Mick Sniper's Captured Tracks imprint is pretty boss. I'm just waiting for the moment Dwyer flips the script on the band again and starts playing thinly-disguised emo songs accompanied by some playing a fucking saw or some shit. He does throw some off-speed junk at us on this one, taking his band down a more folk-inspired path. Whereas *Help* was a rock band sowing some guitar-heavy oats, this one is more like a West Coast folk-psych meander down some trippy streams, not getting all Joan Baez and shit, but trading in some of the bombast for a more understated brand of pop-sike. I'm as amazed as you that this record isn't throwaway dross, and trust me I'm waiting for another shitheap like that Zork's Tape Bruise LP. But this ain't it. Chalk up another winner for Johnny D. (www.capturedtracks.com)

Very quietly, Connecticut's ESTROGEN HIGHS have released their debut long-player called *Tell It To Them* after their pleasant string of singles from the past year or so. No frills garage with a lot of moxie, the tunes have a real thoughtful sort of simplicity to them. Not a blazingly loud or fast outing, but something that still has a lot of punk character. Pure garage-rock in the Teenage Shutdown vein, and with some modern master's influence peppered in as well (OBLIVIANS, perhaps the FELLS, and even BLACK LIPS a bit). It's a real fall season record, a little bit of a downer vibe, but the quality of the tunes will have you whistling along as you rake up the leaves. This thing is getting little to no attention, which is a shame (and what happens when you let a shitty label release your record). Make me proud and do these kids right. (www.dead-beat-records.com)

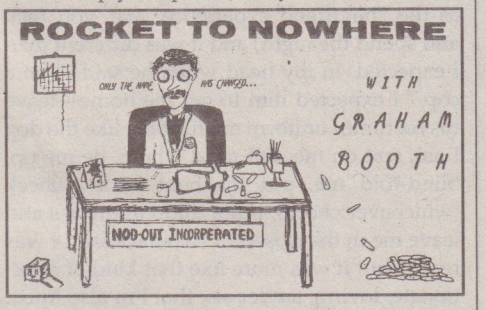
IN THE RED RECORDS DEPT.: Mr. Larry Hardy continues to embarrass all other garage labels in existence today. He's got some high profile offerings this time around from KING KHAN & BBQ and the debut LP from CHRISTMAS ISLAND lots of people have their panties in a bunch for (but not me), but I think the best thing available recently is the new 12" EP from HAUNTED GEORGE called *Where's Charlie Jones?*. A beefy EP featuring his old pal Jimmy Hole from NECESSARY EVILS and Montgomery from LAMPS rounding out a fuller line-up, I think this is a good portent of what his third album will bring. Sounds great with added instrumentation and makes things seem a little less gimmicky overall. The diabolical Mr. Hardy has declared this releases a website only exclusive. Go pay the piper, it's limited. (www.intheredrecords.com)

COOL SINGLE DEPT: I'm going to give this column's 7" slot to PRIMITIVE HANDS who just released their debut single, a two-song triumph of acoustic rock that avoids any of the dreaded trapping of the folk genre. A side project from DEMON'S CLAWS drummer Brian Hilderbrand, it's perfect listening for watching the sun set or rise. Great playing, gutsy and a bit dark and making want to hear a whole lot more. (www.tictactotally.com)

COOL TAPE DEPT.: From right under your Bay Area noses comes BUTCHER COVER, a shit-mess of an outfit combining pigfuck with hatecore or some wild shit. You'll hear references to WHITEHOUSE, BIG BLACK, ELECTRIC EELS, hardcore punk, noise-rock, KBD-punkitude and all sorts of other weirdness jammed onto this thing. It's as if UNSANE released a record on Susan Lawly or something. And the craziest thing is that it's only a demo! I love it when tapes do the job they're supposed to, which is get you excited for the band's actual vinyl releases! Mission accomplished! Man, these guys sound angry.... join them! (rsfvertigo@yahoo.com)

COOL REISSUE DEPT.: Bootregs of DICKS and IVY GREEN LPs are OK by me anytime, anyplace. Whoever grabbed their balls and put these out, I commend you. Both are immaculate reproductions and well worth the scratch. IVY GREEN LP is better than both HUBBLE BUBBLE LPs from a purely punk standpoint, and the DICKS, well, shit. Only the BIG BOYS hold them back from being the best punk band to ever come from the Lone Star State. (Seek and destroy via your Paypal account from discerning mail orders.)

I gotta wind this up now bros, my word count is getting pretty damn high, while I myself am not. But, sounds like Vince just dropped off another package, and I think I smell some "promo items" I need to "review" posthaste. Contact me via *MRR*. Until next time, keep your powder dry.



A year ago this month, I was writing you the sordid details of the WFMU Record Fair in New York City. That shit was ridiculous! Well, I just got back from the Record Fair this year, and I'm trying to come up with something to write about it. WFMU 2009 *was weak as fuck*!

Sorry to be a Negative Nelly, but considering I flew all the way from California for it, it was uncharacteristically anti-climactic. I can't say I had high hopes, but I figured someone, an arch enemy even, would find some sick punk record for $1. Everybody thought so. Friday came and went, and everybody guessed Saturday would be the fateful day. Saturday ended and it was looking grim for Sunday. I didn't make it Sunday morning, but apparently most of the tables were empty, and thus WFMU 2009 came and went without ado.

I should also mention that, while there were few records to be found, the aggro feeding frenzy of previous years was still in full effect. Actually it was worse, since everybody was extra grouchy and irritable. Some people seem to enjoy the fervor of the moment, but it's one of the least appealing aspects for me. I prefer the slow burn of the dig. Unfortunately, there's not really a place for it at 1 p.m. on Friday.

That's not to say I didn't get any records. I got a few. I finally got the 1979 Sacramento free jazz/weird punk hybrid album the GEEKS *It's Not About Notes*, and I picked up the original 1989 Canadian Mole Sound pressing of SIMPLY SAUCER's unreleased '70s proto punk masterpiece *Cyborgs Revisited*. I got a handful of hardcore... THE MOB *Upset the System* 7" EP with Black/White sleeve, THE MEATMEN *Blood Sausage* 7" EP still had the sticker, and finally got a first Pressing of Arizona's JFA *Blatant Localism* 7" EP with its telltale small spindle hole.

I got a couple cool powerpop and DIY singles I'd been after. NY's the BRATS *Keep Doin' (What You're Doin')* first single with tough picture sleeve, cool '70s glam punk, and a rare variant on the famed Whiplash Records. Milwaukee, Wisconsin's the RPM'S *I Don't Wanna Be Young* 45 is great powerpop currently slated for reissue. Finally got the first RADIO FREE EUROPE 45 circa 1980 from Texas of post punky goodness, and the first MODERN ART STUDIO 45 from Ohio. One I've been putting off for a nice price is the GROUP XEX LP from New Jersey, weird early '80s dark synth wave. All that, the *Hoosier Hysteria* split LP from DOW JONES AND THE INDUSTRIALS and the GIZMOS and a pile of weird stuff I'd never heard of rounded out the fair's finds for me. Nothing was particularly cheap or super expensive, just good records for reasonable prices. Most of the people I know had similar experiences.

A quick rundown of some of the crazier records I saw for sale or changing hands: SIEGE original demo tape, *Ingenting For Norge* LP compilation, NERVOUS EATERS *Just Head* 45 with rare Picture Sleeve, ANTI-BAND 7" EP rare SoCal punk obscuro, Canada's DRY HEAVES *Shoot Yourself* 7" EP, Texas' DOT VAETH GROUP 45, THE QUICK *Pretty Please Me* 10" and a healthy dose of high priced US punk and hardcore classics. In the past buying seemed to be more focused on splurging for specific top wants, and quite a few $200+ records would change hands throughout the weekend. This year people seemed more focused on the $40 or less range, buying lots of it, but few punk records sold for more than $100.

Honestly, I was a bit more excited by a few internet finds earlier in the month. Nick Blinko completists might appreciate this longtime want of mine, *THE THING FROM THE CRYPT* Compilation LP. Released in 1981, it features early tracks from two Nick Blinko projects... THE SOFT DRINKS who had a girl singer, and S-HATERS whose early material has a great dark gothic DIY vibe; both groups would go on to release 45s on the Outer Himalayan label. In all it's one of the better DIY comps of the era with EXHIBIT A, GAMBIT OF SHAME, SAD LOVERS & GIANTS, but punk purists should steer clear. Also picked up the second (and rarer) compilation in the series from a friend, supposedly limited to 200 copies, *ANOTHER THING FROM THE CRYPT* LP from 1984 goes further into post punk/cold wave territories with one of my favorite JOY DIVISION clones the SLEEPING PICTURES. You can probably blog all this shit if you care.

All that and a few other unexpected comeups... the elusive first TRANQUILIZER 7" flexi from Japan is one I'd given up on long ago. I think my ears are wishing I had given up, as TRANQUILIZER induces aural bleeding. If you don't believe me, check out Stuart's Japanese Noise Flexi Feature over at Shit-Fi.com. And then there's the other one I gave up on long ago... the Test Press only BLACK MARKET BABY *Crimes of Passion* 45 from Washington DC's Limp Records. The tracks have long since appeared elsewhere, but BLACK MARKET BABY has been a perennial fave around here for years, so it's nice to add it to the stacks. If you haven't done so already, do yourself a favor and track down their *Senseless Offerings* LP and infectious *Potential Suicide* 45. They have a unique melodic take on the classic DC hardcore punk sound. Both were reissued on the Bitzcore compendium *Baby Takes* in the early '90s, and are hopefully still available in some format.

Go Get It!

Uh oh, my column is really late. October was a gig a minute kinda month, and before I knew it, October was actually the past, and it November was the present. When things like that happen the 'ol "your column is late" email shows up which is never a good feeling. I want you *MRR* folks to know, I like pleasing people, rather than displeasing them. Luckily, my weekend was an experience of, mainly pleasure, and I'm hoping I can transmit some of it through the words in here.

Saturday I recorded the prolific and consistent Iron Lung for a compilation release, and among other things, I found it to be an exercise in proficiency on their part, and thus a pleasant experience on mine. Originally I was thinking I would write some kind of "recording diary" like a "tour diary" (you know the boring lists of towns punk bands visit, the beers they drank in them, and the inside jokes that begin at them). The thing is, it went so well there ain't too much to talk about. The boys showed up, they knocked the ball out of the park (or for those of you who don't get sports analogies—they raged and kicked ass), and then we had dinner and rushed off to Providence to play a good show and die of smoke inhalation (not because we chose to

"smoke volcanic dope," but because everyone is a camel smoking rebellious teenager in Providence... except DROPDEAD).

Some shit about vocals—hardcore and punk bands generally have a big emphasis on vocals, and while in some ways they're the easiest thing to take care of, because you can do them with only one mic, it seems like they can accidentally become a bit of an after thought, which they shouldn't be. Usually if you've got a singer whose only job in the band is their vocals, I find they always want to hold the mic when recording. Let me advise against it here. I know some people who allow it, but I find it tends to sound like shit in the worst way. Why?

Bad Scenario 1: Singer performs similar to the way they would at practice including bringing the mic back and forth, to and from their mouth for each phrase in the song, meaning that it's constantly moving around and never in the same place. It'll be an endless barrage of unevenness. I find these folks, as they get more "in the zone" start to move around more like they would during practice or a live set, which can also lead to quicker fatigue. A lot of people see vocals as the easiest part of doing a punk band, but in reality they can be extremely difficult and tiring. A guitarist can work for six or eight hours before they really start to get worn down, and most of the time they're fine to do it again the next day. Most singers (and by singers I mean shouters, shriekers, slurrers, screamers... ahem, "vocalists") have an hour, maybe two or three absolute tops in them when they're in the process of doing permanent vocal chord damage, and after that, they might be out of commission for a day or two. When you're recording try and keep them relaxed, try not to let them burn out too quick, and while you're at it try and keep them hydrated. Maybe it's the straight edger in me, but I find water is much better at getting that job done than beer, but it's your party. Anyway whatever they drink, the last thing you want them doing, is prancing around giving you the live experience in the studio.

Bad Scenario 2: Singer burns their vocals out and gets tired really fast, and is soon crouched on the floor, cupping the mic during takes. It's practically hanging out of their mouth, half the vocals sound like dry heaves that were recorded at the bottom of a trash can, and so on. If you're a sick gore grind band with a pointy and illegible logo, this might work, but otherwise, I'd recommend against it.

My advice is have the vocal mic on a stand. My solution whenever there is no mic-stand, is grab a cymbal stand, and tape the mic to it. I think I've mentioned it before here. Your drummer may be pissed, but it works pretty OK. Just another reason that duct tape is your best friend until you die.

Have the singer stand where they feel comfortable and try some vocal checks in the headphones or monitors. If it sounds shitty you may want to have them move a little closer or farther, or reposition the mic. Most people get past the initial awkwardness of not holding the microphone kind of quick, but some of these sensitive punk singers are like delicate flowers and they never get over not being able to hold the mic. For these folks, try giving them something like another mic that's not hooked up, a drum stick, another mic stand/drum stand, a plastic bottle, whatever, to grab onto if it makes them feel more comfortable. Just make sure they don't start singing into an old turkey leg instead of the actual microphone. Also for the more timid, I find that dimming the lights actually helps a lot. This may seem like a trick I learned from a Madonna "The Making of: Ray of Light" special, and the truth is: that I did. You'd be surprised (or maybe not that surprised) how often people prefer to sing in relative darkness.

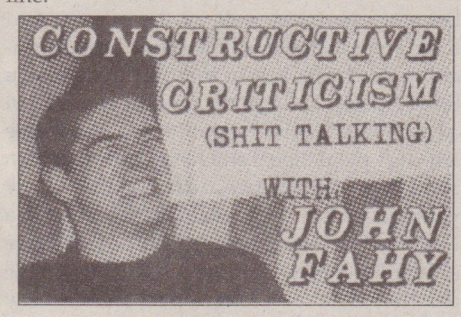
You probably don't want the singer more than a foot from the mic, but go with what you think sounds good for the band. You may want a wind screen in front of the mic if you're getting a lot of pppp and sssss sounds (I've mentioned before in this column that these are called plosives) from your vocalist. You can typically buy these at a music store for like $10 or you can make one out of a coat hanger and an old sock or your some old nylons (AKA "pantyhose"—this word makes me feel kinda gross) that you stretch over the coat hanger. It needs to be just an inch or two in front of the mic, so you'll probably need to duct tape it to the stand. Twist the coat hanger into a circular shape, with a straight part at the bottom and you'll basically be all set.

If you're not happy with how things are sounding right off the bat you may want to lose some of the bottom end in the EQ as it can mud up the vocals a bit. You may also want to think about the room you're in. For really rapid fire fast vocalists you're going to want some place that's pretty dry, probably with carpeting and dry wall. Fairly low ceilings would be good too. If the surfaces are too reflective they can just sound weird. If you want some ambience in a setting like this, you can set up a second mic across the room and you should still get enough reflection to liven it up a little. If you want a really reflective sound, which I happen to think works well with slower or more atmospheric vocals try something with some tile in it—the obvious choice is a bathroom. I recommend cleaning it before you go this route. You may want to use two mics in this setup too, and try and set the main mic up so that it's still relatively dry, and let the room mic catch all the reflections from your bathtub and sink. A cheap omni directional mic is a good choice for the room mic if you have it at your disposal.

Long story short I fucked a cop. He even said when I was fucking him, "Now you can tell everyone you fucked a cop" Ewwww!!!! We rode around in his corvette and we got back to his place where he had four Cosmopolitans (you go girl) and we did the nasty. It was one of those dates that I refer to as the "boyfriend experience" (i.e. you fuck and spend the night) and it was different than I expected. In my head when he said, "I'm a cop," I expected him to get me home—leave his costume/uniform on, fuck me like the dog I am, spit on me, call me a whore, tie me up, blind-fold me, put his boot in my cheek (whichever cheek), put a dildo in my ass and leave me in the closet for two days (and I was ready) but it was more like that kind of affectionate, loving, tender sex that I'm also into... with people who aren't strangers. Ya know? I wanted him to use me like a washcloth or even a toilet, but we just necked like teenagers. He was so pretty, like smooth moisturized hands, manicured everything. He even had a shaved butthole (his asshole twinkled every time he spread his cheeks) we flip fucked and he made me a sandwich. I chilled on it a second and really thought about the whole scenario. Besides the loving sex, I could really get used to this. That is—I heard wedding bells. I would marry the handsome old white man cop and really really really piss of my dad. Yes! I sat watching the handsome cop, passed out, watching MTV Jams and my mind raced to the future. Me in that blonde wig, cooking and shit, raising our little white adopted kids, and visiting my parents down south and my mother saying to me, "You've finally gone too far."

Holy shit! Was I on crack?! Raise his white babies?! Fuck that... I ain't no family man! I'm a musician! I wanted to wake him and tell him that this cannot be my life, but he was pretty tanked and I didn't want his drunk ass taking me nowhere. I just dealt with it. I called my girlfriend from Louisiana (this ex-solider crazy Cajun bitch) and she read my fucking beans, "you fuck around with all these punk-ass punk boys, catching all that throat bullshit, and you run away from the man who could do some shit for you—He's employed by the government, girl!!! He got benefits!" It was true. But the reason I was running away from this man was because he

was the man. Like what if I wanted to pull my usual bullshit like smoking weed at the airport or throwing a brick through an enemy's window and brag about it loudly at a party? This would only put his career in danger and I couldn't live with myself if there was one less cop on the street. Though my big white sex cop had a nice dick, I know that sometimes there has to be more than that for a relationship to happen (sometimes). He was too stable—I hate that. Despite the nay-say from my therapist, I knew in my heart that I needed to be with a boy that was going to fuck with my head a lot and hit me if I got out of line.



Who Are You And Why Am I Here?
Alienated Within The Underground

If you live in a small town, or maybe even if you don't, you know the excitement of finding another person that's into hardcore punk. I'm 26 and I still get really stoked whenever I find out someone's into some weirdo bands, or being straight edge, or anything that shows they're excited about getting immersed in the underground. Lately though, I find it harder to relate to people I meet that are younger and getting involved mainly through the internet.

I feel like I know everyone in my little town that's into punk. Of course I'm always on the lookout for new blood, so you can imagine how amped I was when I met a kid wearing a PLUTOCRACY shirt at a show at my house. I never was the hugest fan of PLUTOCRACY, but this clearly was a big stepping stone to have a huge conversation about hardcore punk—only it didn't really go down that way. Years ago, I would have figured, "It's totally silly, but this kid and I will probably become friends based on interests alone." When I approached said kid hoping to have this grand talk about the wonders of hardcore punk, I was terribly let down by the tepid conversation that followed. The kid deferred and mumbled agreement, but that was the end of it. Later I found out he'd gotten into the band through MP3 only and bought the shirt. There's no real trouble with this at all, other than later on when the same kid was on shrooms and actually willing to speak to me, I came to find that his discovery of all punk music was made along with dozens of other genres of music and his interest was fleeting.

Now I'm not so worried by people passing through, but I'm worried that kids now can get pretty deep into the underground—and fast, thanks to the internet—before moving along. It's not threatening, just confusing. Who are these people? Are these the punks of tomorrow—glancing at DIY before returning to the computer to get into some other wacky genre they never would have known about before the advent of the internet? How disposable have we become? I'm not so shallow as to worry about "poseurs" or any such horseshit, just more casual involvement. That is worrisome to me.

My friend Meghan was telling me about a discussion she had with Mike from BAADER BRAINS about how today's kids can get on the internet with no knowledge of punk, and over the course of a few days, learn the entire history of the movement and find and listen to all the classic records. He wasn't saying this was a good or a bad thing, just that it's wildly different from how he and Meghan had grown up. I don't necessarily think it's always a bad thing either, but the one thing I think is absolutely true is that the work of getting into punk doesn't have to be there, and that is not a good thing, because work makes appreciation.

Then there's the more "business" aspect of things. What is happening to distribution? Is the punk rock record store/large distro on the way out? Why would I get a record from the distro when I can get it directly from the band or label? This is how most of my own releases have been sold of late, and how I'm likely to buy records myself, such as the IRON LUNG/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT/WALLS collaboration LP that just came out, and sold out almost immediately; the internet provides a release date and payment information and punks worried about missing the boat can dive right on it. This is not just more profitable to the band or label, it's more convenient for the buyer. But what about those stores and distros that have been institutions for so long? Am I scared of change? Am I a republican?

This "missing-the-boat" aspect has also produced an odd kind of fan-collector-punk that I simply can't sympathize or identify with. A good few of my friends have released demo tapes of brand new bands, only to have them raved about on the internet and then suddenly be bombed with emails from nervous kids that haven't heard the demo, but can't wait to pay for it. Possessions are enough for a lot of kids, as far as punk involvement, and I think that's on the rise. The re-sale of these same items for exorbitant prices on eBay also shows there's plenty of jaded jerkoffs lurking about waiting to make a buck off of something sincere. Another phenomenon unfathomable to me is the release and sale of things like the FLOOR box set for $200. Of course I'd like that item, but who the fuck has two hundred fucking dollars right now? I don't, but all of these goddamn sofa punks must. Bullshit is not acceptable when it comes to business—the message board purchaser wants his goods now. A friend of mine sold bootleg t-shirts and had one complainer seriously lament that the shirts were not Hanes brand as advertised, but Fruit of the Loom. When the fuck did the punk consumer reports come into effect? It's a fucking bootleg. Where the fuck did these people come from? What jobs do they have? Are we encouraging them?

While bullshit is a no-go when it comes to everyday capitalist bullshit, many kids today have no backbone or scruples about anything like attending corporate-backed fests. It's no wonder that our underground looks so disposable when Scion or Pabst are pitching in to tap into the market of such faithful little consumers. I like a lot of bands that play some of these fests, but any band I'm in is never going to be on a flyer with a corporation. I'm not morally superior, I'm just a punk and it's the least I can do. Are you really going to play a show put on by Converse (Nike)? Seriously? Be a punk.

That's another thing—everybody's afraid of being a punk. I've heard so many bullshit comments from kids about "not wanting to be labeled" or "categorized." These are the kinds of people you'd never want to be in a bar fight with—they would leave your dumb ass to be clobbered and beaten all fucking day long. People no longer want to do anything as simple as making a stand and identifying themselves with a group of people that are opposed to or outside the majority of society. Say you're a goddamn punk or fucking scram, assholes.

I understand the wandering-whiny-ness of this column, but I simply do not know my place in this community sometimes, or where it's going. Anybody with me? I have faith; I think there is always a younger generation that are usually quietly awed by what they're seeing from the shadows at a punk show, and they will bring it to the next step. But can we do them a favor and shave the fucking fat from this underground?

ENDNOTES:

1. I went to and played at a killer house show, the supposed "anti-fest" in Gainesville last weekend, and got to finally see the elusive DADS. Will this band ever record? You better hope so. At the same show, I also got to see SLAVE SCENE, AMPERE, and DIET COKEHEADS. Can't ask for much better. The whole weekend was a blast. Thanks to everyone involved with that show.
2. Contact my friend Dodger via YouTube: dirtydodger. He'll probably show you some really offensive shit, or something so stupid you just don't know what to do with yourself.
3. I loved my hate mail from "Bald Punk," where he explained how I was juvenile with-

out saying what, how or when. Very concise! I do have an email/home address, try communicating with me, ya bald fuck!
4. To that point; John Fahy/15011 Lakeside View Drive/Apt. 2402/Fort Myers/FL/33919 or fahy_john@hotmail.com

FIVE YEARS OF THIS SHIT

This month marks my fifth anniversary as an *MRR* columnist. Where the hell does the time go? How the hell have you put up with this garbage for so long? Do I want to know? Enough of the self-deprecating false modesty shit. While some of these missives are better thought-out than the last minute hackwork I'll occasionally submit, I think I've managed to wing it well-enough to maintain my position at this punk rock institution. Or maybe the esteemed coordinators are afraid to can my ass, worried that I might file an age discrimination suit as I approach my 50th birthday in February, although I'm not the senior member of the *MRR* staff—that's about the only time it seems as though I'm not the oldest person involved in whatever punk pursuit is in front of me.

Writing this month's column is a bit more challenging because I'm doing it while I have my arm in sling. Towards the end of October, I had surgery on my left shoulder to repair a torn labrum. It was something long overdue. I've had chronic pain there for years, unable to do much physical activity for more than a few minutes without it stiffening up on me. After years of procrastination, I finally got it checked out late last year with an orthopedic doctor. He thought it might be some kind of tear but we decided to try a cortisone shot and physical therapy first. That didn't work, I had an MRI and he found a small labral tear. It's not as bad as a rotator cuff tear but not a day in the park, either. So he said I could have the surgery whenever I wanted. Since it'd involve a month in a sling and anywhere from four to six months to get back to full strength, I decided to put it off to the fall and I finally had the arthroscopic procedure a few weeks before I'm typing this—with some pain, I might add. Don't you feel sorry for me? OK, I'll stop the pity party even though I don't have any interns or even shitworkers to help me out here in isolated suburbia.

MRIs are a trip and a half. I had one for my brain maybe three years ago when I was having pretty frequent headaches. That one lasted nearly an hour and after they placed me into the "tube" that's used for those tests, they played a series of tones and rhythmic measures, if I remember correctly. I do remember that the sounds had an experimental/industrial ambiance so I honed in on that aspect of it, treating it like listening to music and it actually got me through it. I told the personnel handling the test that I mainly listened to abrasive, loud stuff so it wasn't anything all that jarring. It was something akin to Twitch-era MINISTRY, where those miscreants were moving from their wimpy new-wave phase into the heavier monster they'd become with the likes of The Land of Rape and Honey, the album with "Stigmata" on it. Twitch was their transitional album—no guitars but it's heady, hammering stuff, culminating in the twelve minute medley-o-hell of "Where You At Now?/Crash and Burn/Twitch." This is absolute speed-industrial mayhem, culminating in what sounds like their electronic instruments exploding and, after the final mass of noise, a voice exorts "entertainment!" and it comes to an end. When I worked one of my record store gigs, I'd put it on about fifteen minutes before closing and it was perfect for clearing the place out. But the MRI tests came back negative, fortunately. They attributed it to poor positioning when sleeping or teeth grinding or a combination of both.

Back to the surgery, though. It wasn't that bad. Since it was arthroscopic, there were only three small incisions. I was in and out of there in probably less than six hours. I actually found a YouTube video of the procedure and it was kind of cool to see what they do, which is insert a razor like implement to prune away the torn cartilage and that's followed by some sort of binding process. Ellen's a bit on the squeamish side and had no desire to watch it. Hell, she was cringing while helping me remove the dressing for the first time. In fact, I ended up throwing her out of the room and did it myself. Sorry, dear. I had to wait 48 hours after the surgery before I could change out of my hospital johnny, which I'd worn home from the hospital or take a shower. I don't know you crusties do it. I felt like a complete grub by that point.

Before the operation, one thing they did was give me a "pain pack," which completely deadened my left shoulder, arm and hand and made it feel like it weighed 50 lbs. This was achieved with a rather intense shot into my neck. I think that and IV tube into my hand hurt worse than the surgery itself. The end result felt like what I'd imagine a stroke on that side would be like. When I touched my arm after the surgery, it felt like warm clay. My dad had a stroke on his left side and lost use of his left arm and hand for the last year and a half of his life. He did not handle it well because he was used to having complete control over his life, having things a certain way and was pissed off about losing any of that control. After dealing with that sensation for twelve or so hours, I don't even want to think about what that would be like as a permanent or even long-term condition.

I got prescribed Dilaudid for the pain and, unfortunately, had the same reaction to it that I've had to Percocet and Vicodin... it helps the pain, but makes me itchy. This is even after taking an antihistamine. That happened after the various dental surgeries I've had this year—it's been one fun experience after another, let me tell you! The only one I can tolerate is Darvocet, which works to an extent but not nearly as well as the others. And there's not as much of the buzz. I don't generally do drugs, but in that physical state, a bit of chemical relaxation wouldn't have been a bad thing. Maybe I should try to peddle the left-over painkillers I still have. I saw a certain band from the Midwest do just that a few years back when I saw them in Richmond at a No Way Fest after-show. No shit—they were selling Percs at $3 a pop on their merch table and they didn't last long, either. Those wacky Midwesterners. During their set, as is often the case with wacky Midwestern bands, there was a lot of general mayhem, various objects flying through the air and the like. There was a large supply of hula hoops and I ended up with a broken one in my hand. While I was in the process of flailing someone with that instrument, a milk crate came flying through the air and caught one of my fingernails, which promptly blew up like a plum. Damn, I might have taken a Perc right then and there if it'd been available, risk of side effects be damned.

On top of all this shit, I got miserably sick about a week ago, to the point where I was wondering if I had swine flu or something like that. A music-scene friend of mine came down with it recently. I haven't seen him for a bit (he lives in the Boston area, though) but I asked him about his symptoms and, while I had some of them, I figured it probably wasn't the case. He mentioned he thought he got it at the EYEHATEGOD show in town and I got nervous when I remembered that a friend of mine who took me on errands a few days after that show had been at the same gig. I did learn something, though—Darvocet is good for treating colds/coughs/etc so it handled that fairly well.

So here I am—two more weeks in this sling and I'll be able to go back in the pit. OK, maybe not, but I'll be able to venture to a show again. I just started driving again a few days ago, albeit on a limited basis. That's what really drove me nuts—not being able to get out of here that much.

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Since I couldn't get out of here that much, I did mail order some records while conva-

lescing and they've all shown up and are helping to ease the pain a bit. I'm not going to cover much in the way of new releases in this column, but I'm blasting the ORGANISM 12" *Hope* (Hardware Records, www.hardware-records.com) and their head-on collision of SYSTEMATIC DEATH-style ruthlessness and newer Japanese blaze is providing the brain fuel. It's been out awhile, but I only became aware of it recently. I should mention that I downloaded it on one of those music blogs to check it out and decided I absolutely had to have the "real thing." There are any number of opinions on that kind of activity but with records getting so expensive, I welcomed the "try before you buy" opportunity.

Before ORGANISM, the walls were shaken for a bit by *Atrapados* by DESTINO FINAL (La Vida Es Un Mus, www.lavidaesunmus.com). This is just as great as my colleague Cissie said it was in her column some months back. Some brutalizing, blazing stuff. To update the uninitiated, this Spanish band is essentially a continuation of INVASION. As with Invasion, there's a strong DISCHARGE and DISORDER inspiration, but they manage to make it something distinctive. The reverb remains on Guille's emanations although the production isn't as echo-laden as with the band's predecessor. It just provides a more direct route to DESTINO FINAL's savage burn. I should hopefully get around to my best of '09 a column or two from now and that will be on the list.

HERDS' self-titled album brims with intense hardcore, showing growth and skill from their earlier 7"s. Blistering speed, crushing heaviness and creating a sonic maelstrom. Gigantic slabs of bass, rhino-charge drumming and flailing guitar. Meanwhile, vocalist Mike Pries (former THREATENER bass-player) lets out some damaged-sounding howlings. What's interesting is if you dig a bit under the wall of sound, there's a near-anthemic punk quality to songs like "The Wolves Of Isle Royale, "The Life Of Caribou" and "The Seas." Meanwhile, "Trees" takes a harder-rocking Cro-Mags-ish turn. There's an overriding lyrical theme—with the words delivered in phrases and fragments—dealing with seasonal cycles and the effects on nature and plant and animal life. Environmental hardcore? It's a different tack, fused to a powerful sonic maelstrom. The LP comes with a download card that includes those two 7"s. (Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

MUNDO MUERTO's debut 7" only has two songs on it but they're both catchy keepers. The A-Side, "Politicos Falsos," is the real killer, a scampering mix of tuneful punk, D-beat shuffle and gruffly-engaging vocals. "Silencio" is punctuated with some "whoah-oh-ohs" and favors an old-school hardcore gnash. I enjoyed seeing them earlier this year and this disc whets the appetite for more. (Que Punk?, www.myspace.com/mundoxmeurto)

SWORN LIARS' *Vile Device* has also been out awhile on Big Neck Records but Mr. Big Neck generously included a copy of the CD in an order a couple of months ago. Snarlin', nervy punk and garage with some electronic effects scattered here and there. The title track offers the invitation "welcome to my doom" (that's what it sounds like, anyway) and it's gladly accepted. The traditional garage/psych side is played up on the likes of "Kill Me" or "Foul Thing" but most of the time, it's pure throttle, as with "Down," "Bubble Boy" or "Mental Fissure." There's something sinister at work here. These German deviants include members of the underrated MOORAT FINGERS and you should seek out their album "Punk (As In Prison)" from 2002 or so. (PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.bigneckrecords.com)

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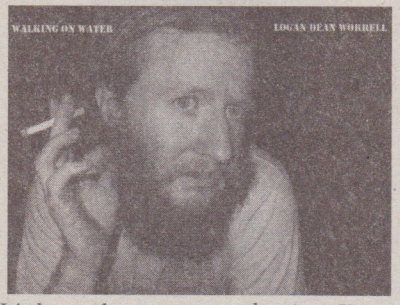

It's been about two months since I've seen the beautiful Austin, Texas skyline, eaten a taco, or jerked off in my own bed. Seeing as that I only have one day left of the spiritual journey, I figure it's about time that I sit back and reflect on these wonderful times. During the past couple years it's been proven to me over and over again that being punk is about the people, rather than the music. Discharge is great and everything, but what makes Discharge really great is when you're sitting around with a bunch of tight homies, someone plays 'em, and the only thing that makes sense to do is start throwing bottles and tackling each other regardless of what environment you may be in. It's about singing along to the records, loud as a mutha-fucker, saying the wrong lyrics half the time. It's about just bullshitting, and telling stories. If you're still punk only for the music, then brother, you're missing the point. By far, the best part of my trip has been seeing some good ole' friends, and meeting so many good new friends. Not having much money or sense didn't stop me from having some good times, and if it wasn't for my friends, I'd have been dead from starvation long ago.

After I left the San Francisco Bay, I headed northeast to Toronto, Canada. It's fucking cold in Canada. Everything's fucking cold there. Plus to top it off, everybody eats ice cream all the fucking time. Are you kidding me? Now I know I'm a product of the Texas educational system, but I was sure as fuck taught to drink hot cocoa when it's cold, and fucking ice cream when it's hot. Zoë even had a Dairy Queen not even a block from her place. They didn't sell chicken fingers though, total bullshit. Zoë got me a nice place to live during my time there, which was amazing. It wasn't much, but it was the biggest closet I've lived in for quite sometime—my buddy's in high school was pretty choice though (It came equipped with a black light poster of an alien wearing a Dr. Seuss hat with a message that read, "Take me to your dealer."). My Canadian closet did have a sick poster of Dave Mustang, and a Rammer boom box. There were two solid job leads I had cooking out there. One was to be a douche bag that hands out fliers at snowboard conventions, and the other one was to jack off on the internet for money. Now, one of these jobs involved something I knew a great deal about, and the other was a whole new world that I was completely unaware of. I'll give you a hint, the first time I had ever seen a snowboard in real life a month ago, but I've been polishing the one eyed gofer twice a day since I was twelve, and sometimes more on sick days in junior high.

I was prepared to lower my standards of what I was willing to do for a buck, for some reason it didn't really seem to bother me. It's only natural right? One of my dudes got me a DJ gig playing records the day before the Fucked Up weekend. That didn't go so well. Apparently people in Canada aren't ready for true art in its purist form yet. So I had to sacrifice myself and took a pint glass or two in the arm, which was lucky for me, because if you dumb Canadian bastards weren't so goddamn drunk off "cider" or whatever the fuck you drink, you might have actually hit my beautiful face. And that sir would have been a tragedy it its own self. All and all, Toronto was great. Some great cheap food was eaten, some good weed was smoked, and some good times were had. The Jamaican patties in Kensington Market are a must: only a buck.

Next up was good ole' Montreal. Texas and Montreal have a long history of friendship going back to the wagon days. The Quebecquah are a rare breed to say the least. They can drink more than you, party way longer than you, and dance better than the cast of *Soul Train*. They will piss on your couch, and not skip a beat. They are hands down the punkest people on the fucking planet, and are not afraid to show it. I stayed with my old roommates from Texas, Simon and Alanna, and their roommate, notorious

couch pisser Simone. I ate poutine, (french fries, gravy and cheese curds), sometimes twice a day, the whole time I was there. Someday I'm gonna open a poutine place down in Austin and make a million fucking dollars. Me and Lanny played Boggle and Skip-Bo a lot because it was colder than a by-god all the goddamn time. While other days I just spent walking around watching the leaves change. During my time there the Varning from Montreal fest was going on which included a ton of third rate D-beat bands, and a handful of truly amazing bands. Illegal was by far the best, along with Complications and Perdition from NYC. Perdition were so cute. Kinda like the Jonas Brothers of D-beat punk: just adorable. Check them out as soon as you can. Soon as I get home I plan on lining my walls with magazine cutouts of their faces, which I'm gonna kiss every night before I go to sleep. Simone has pissed on three of my couches, in three different visits to my town. So before I left Montreal, I made sure to leave a little time to piss on his bed as my own little was of saying, "Fuck you, I love you." I'm sure to catch a serious ass beating next time I'm there, but I wouldn't have stayed in the kitchen if I couldn't have taken the heat. Another amazing stay with amazing people, so far so good.

My last stop on my voyage was in Bridgewater Corners, Vermont. It was actually quite unexpected. A couple buddies in Montreal were headed to Boston, and seeing as I need a ride to Vermont eventually to catch a flight, I figured why not go a few days early and save a little bus fare. I'm not known for my financial stability, so staying with some family in bum fuck Vermont sounded like the right thing to do. Bridgewater Corners is not a town or a city; it's a village. There is a general store, a town hall that also doubles as a movie theatre, and a pizza place, which actually isn't that bad. My family up here teaches English at the local high school. (Yes I see the irony in the fact that I can barely speak the language yet my family's bread and butter is made from teaching it.) I was left with a pick-em up truck, and some directions to some historical sites of interest.

There was one other catch; the other occupant in the house was my aunt's 93 year old mother, Louise. Now, I had never met her before though she claims we had when I was like four or some shit, but she's 93 so what the fuck does she know anyway. Let me tell you, she's an absolute delight. Ms. Louise is super on the ball for a 93-year-old, and funny as hell, too. It's basically just been her and I hanging out every day, just bullshitting around town, wrecking shop, and getting into trouble. Ms. Louise somehow knew where Joe Perry from Aerosmith's house was, so we went over there for a bit. He's a nice guy actually. Kinda small though. Not like Danzig small, more like Dio small. Motherfucker must be older than baseball. He assured me that the rumors of Aerosmith breaking up were false, which was a relief to Ms. Louise who celebrates their entire catalogue sans the ugly *Get A Grip* years. JP gave me Alicia Silverstone's digits while we were chilling. She's aight. Not my style, but I would, naw mean? I'd have to say the hanging out with Ms. Louise was definitely a highlight of my trip. She might not do as much cocaine as the Montreal contingent, but she did have her hospice caretaker make me every meal I ate for a week, and that shit was tight. On the last day I had to take her to the doctor to get her blood levels checked, and when the receptionist asked if I was her grandson she said, "No, he's my friend." Adorable. Let the record show that I fucking hate old people. Oh, she also tried to set me up on a date with the girl who works at the bank. That woman can fucking hustle. Which reminds me of a joke: What does it taste like to go down on a 93-year-old lady? Well, Depends. Get it?

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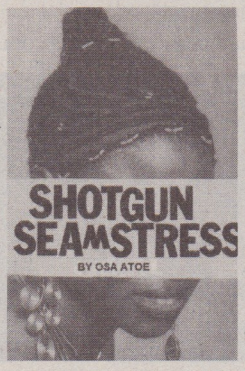

Part of the reason I set up punk shows is that I somehow still feel compelled to work toward this vision I have of punk rock being this thing that attracts and benefits all kinds of people. It's like I have my own utopian fantasy of what I think punk rock should be and some small part of me feels like it's possible, so I can't let it go no matter how many times I get let down. Fantasies of utopia are what get you hooked on punk in the first place right? When you're a teenager, the unfairness of everyday life begins to feel unbearable, and then along comes punk rock, offering you a different way to relate—a different way to have community and live your every day life that feels more fair, honest and free. At moments, it really does feel perfect even though nothing ever really is. When I was around nineteen and twenty years old, I believed whole-heartedly in the ability of the punk scene to actually be anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, feminist, anarchist—all of these things existing perfectly inside a bubble.

Numerous people by now have made the point that punk rock isn't as separate from the "regular world" as we'd like to think it is. Many people have also pointed out that no matter how punk we believe ourselves to be, there's still a little piece of The Man inside us all that recreates the injustice we wish didn't exist in the world. After a while, it's easy to feel disillusioned when you start to see all of the flaws in your community and in yourself. Maybe the feminist anti-rape collective you've been a part of tries to confront a known sexual assaulter, fails to make real justice happen, subsequently disintegrates and it leaves you feeling angry and lost. You're queer or a person of color and the isolation you're experiencing in your local super-white, super-straight punk scene is bringing you to the depths of despair. Your band breaks up, or you have a falling out with another punk you really loved. Oh, heartbreak.

I remember reading this Nomy Lamm article sometime before I moved to the Northwest. I think she was living in Olympia at the time. I don't remember the name of the article or what book it was in, but her words probably influenced my next major punk rock utopian fantasy the most. She wrote from the perspective of a fat, queer, Jewish, punk rock feminist with a peg leg. Obviously, her point of view is unique and quite bad-ass. Her writing was politically fierce—a lot about self-acceptance, learning to love your body, rejecting the standards of normalcy that make you feel inferior—all of it made me feel like out there in The Great Northwest were a group of truly open-minded, punk rock, riot girl dykes who would readily accept me. Don't we all wish we could find a space where things like race and gender cease to matter (in a negative way)? I just wanted to feel free.

I needed to hear Nomy Lamm's words and to believe that their perfect manifestation existed somewhere in the world. It seems so naive now and kind of silly in a way, but at this point, I can see it both ways, I guess. Nomy was writing from her heart, from an internal universe that we create to exist inside of, to protect ourselves and heal ourselves. That place is real, and writing about it helps it come to exist in a material sense. When I was living in Portland, I met straight girls, queer girls, fat girls, trans girls, and even a couple brown girls who made zines, were in bands, and put on important events around town. There were queer punk basement shows and events like Fat Girl Speaks. It was a utopia of sorts, but then on the other hand, it was disappointing to see the queer punk scene sort of de-evolve into empty gay dance nights and cookie cutter fashion topped off with side swept bangs (this was around 2004). And besides, I hadn't dated anyone in years and I didn't have any other black friends. It felt like time to move on and so I did.

I think it's mostly because I'm black that I

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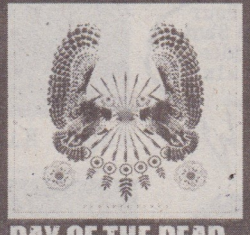

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never thought of punk rock as forever home. When things start to go bad inside that world, my first impulse is to withdraw or try to leave it behind. At some point, every black punk kid I know has had to wonder, "Do all these white kids really have my back?" But then you draw yourself out of that cynical place and you realize that a select few of them do, and then you make more brown friends and finally things start to feel more balanced. Then after you complete that process, you can say, "Well I've created this dope community for myself, maybe I can do it for others." And that's where the fantasies come in. "Maybe the punk scene could be more like _____. Maybe young queer punk kids or young brown punk kids can have more support now." No matter if many of my utopian punk rock fantasies have been a let down, they still inspire me somehow. It's not so much about making the fantasy real, but using it as fuel to move forward, and being grown-up enough to look back and see all the good shit, not just the disasters.

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Shortly after 9/11, George W. Bush secretly signed two executive orders. Both violated basic constitutional protections as well as US obligations under international treaties, yet both carried the force of law.

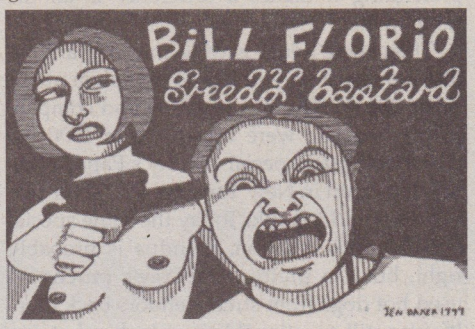
The first grants the president (and other officials, including the secretary of defense) the right to declare anyone (including an American citizen) an "unlawful enemy combatant." A person so declared has no redress, no way to appeal, no ability to challenge that designation. Once a person has been named an enemy combatant, according to the Bush Administration, he has no rights. He can be held without charges
forever, tortured, you name it (Well, the president or the secretary of defense names it).

In the second covert executive order, the president directs the CIA to target and assassinate all enemy combatants (again, including American citizens). These two documents came into play on November 3, 2002, when a CIA-operated Predator drone plane, violating Yemeni airspace, fired a Hellfire missile at a car containing Qaed Salim Sinan al-Harethi, supposedly Al Qaeda's number one man in Yemen at the time. US officials didn't know that an American citizen, Kamal Derwish, was riding along. The Bush administration said the killing of an American in this fashion was legal; "this is legal because the president and his lawyers say so—it's not much more complicated than that," CBS News reported at the time. "I can assure you that no constitutional questions are raised here," said Bush's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, after the CIA assassinations. "He's well within the balance of accepted practice and the letter of his constitutional authority."

Part of the Military Commissions Act of 2006, the section that eliminated the writ of habeas corpus, was stricken down by the US Supreme Court last year. But the rest of the MCA remains in force, including a passage that defines an enemy combatant as anyone who provides "material support" to the "enemy." Naturally, the enemy is anyone the president says it is. There is no distinction between foreigners and US citizens. Jose Padilla, the so-called would-be "dirty bomber" held in a Navy brig since 2002, was tried and convicted of such "material support" charges in 2007. (The government couldn't prosecute Padilla for their original dirty bomb charges because they had tortured him so severely that he had been reduced to mental retardation.) Now that times have supposedly changed, it's time to ask: Why hasn't President Obama abrogated Bush's controversial executive orders? If Obama truly seeks a break from the lawlessness of the prior administration, what better way to show it?

Simply put, no one man (even a nice, articulate, charismatic one) ought to claim the right to suspend a person's constitutional rights. Certainly no one man (not even a young, handsome, likeable one) should be able to have anyone he wants whacked. Even in dictatorships, the right of life and death is reserved to judges and juries operating under some veneer of impartiality and the quest for justice. But that's not the case here in the United States. In 2002 Scott Silliman, director of the Center on Law, Ethics and National Security at Duke University asked: "Could you put a Hellfire missile into a car in Washington DC, under [the Bush] theory? The answer is yes, you could." Nothing much has changed since then. Obama has eliminated the use of the phrase "enemy combatant," but the New York Times reported the change is merely meant to "symbolically separate the new administration from Bush detention policies." Though the words are different Obama attorney general Eric Holder's definition of who can and cannot be held, said the Times, is "not significantly different from the one used by the Bush administration."

These days, Obama has ramped up the assassination of political opponents of the US and the US-aligned authoritarian regime in Pakistan, deploying more Predator drone plane attacks than Bush. But that's just for now. Obama could still order a government agency to murder you. He could even do it personally. After all, in the global war on terrorism, the whole world is a battlefield. And anyone can be the enemy. What's next, granting Mr. Yes-We-Can the right to deflower virgins in the District of Columbia?



I've been sitting here thinking about how to write a column where I could come up with an analogy of how hot dog vendor prices and quality can relate to death and dying and coping with loss. I sat around my parents' house yesterday and watched seven episodes of the television show *Chopped* on Food Network. Perhaps its idea of challenging chefs to make meals with ingredients that seem to have nothing in common set me up to write in a similar way. By the way I tried making all the jokes from the Police Squad series condensed into a rhyming one minute a twenty five second song for about five years and all I came up with was a fifteen second song with one joke that didn't rhyme at all. Just warning you.

Walking through midtown New York today, I thought about how most people complain or endorse the sorts of pretentiousness of change in the city, the truth is it's really just a cycle repeating itself and we do not live long enough with the same mindset to notice. So while one minute looking at things changing is very forward moving and gentrifying and all that, in the next moment the same thing can end up being very retro fashionable if you're willing to pull back far enough into fads and trends in history.

There are some things that seem very new and somewhat creepy, like upscale deli chains (not Subway). Café Metro has twelve locations in Manhattan or Pax, fourteen locations, Dean and Delucca etc. While I generally do not eat at these, preferring my local megakoreo super deli, I think all would agree that Korean delis have no standard when it comes to price, quality or how many days in a row they'll leave something sitting in a steam tray.

If you look back a few decades, Chock Full O' Nuts used to have 80 locations in New York. Right now there are a little over 30 Dunkin Donuts and somewhere between 150 and 200 Starbucks (with more closing every day). That sounds like double the chain coffee

shops but in the '70s you'd probably venture into less than half of the neighborhoods in Manhattan that you would today. Personally I don't drink coffee, so this has no bearing on me whatsoever. A $5 cup of Starbucks coffee or a $.85 cup at Dunkin, the fact is you probably get free coffee at work, so going out to buy some and pretending it makes a difference is all the same to me.

Then there's just getting into a grandpa-like mode where you like to complain about price and quality of everything and compare it to when you were fifteen. So in 1990 the recession buster special at Gray's Papaya (the hot dog chain in New York) was $1.50 for two hot dogs and a drink. Today the same special is $4.50 with inflation, grandpa is probably right, but I'm pretty sure Gray's purchased used hot dogs from street vendors back then. It's also still questionable if and when hot dog vendors stopped peeing in the water that makes the steam tray steam. Calculating inflation always takes the drama out of such conversations, and grandpa always saves his wages in those years for another conversation, like when you ask for a loan.

I think the thing to remember is that people now are always going to hype the status quo as good or bad to their own agenda. OK, I'm still working on how I'm going to work our mortality into this.

This decade is almost over. What will future generations think about us if we happen to be associated with this ten year period. If we look back at each decade of the past hundred years, we can put them into two categories: 1. excess and lack of inhibition, or 1. conservatism and or war. The '60s combination of both probably cancels out the '90s lack of anything interesting at all. So my best estimate is 2000-2009 were like 1990-1999, but even lamer. According to this analogy, we're more than due for a good decade of over-indulgence; I'm not talking about flipping houses.

I welcome a new decade of excess without war or weird pushes to set the clock back. I also feel novelty punk bands will rise to new levels of stupid and help define the new decade. Let's face it—the whole idea of being in a punk band because you have some heartfelt message, or some alternative lifestyle or you want to be cool is so over. The idea that you can even attain gas money for playing a show, or be able to pay for shipping on a record is so far out the window, it's like one of those ads where cartoon money is gushing out representing your heating bills while some annoying voice yatters on about how you can get two windows for the price of one, assuming you sell your old windows to the city so they can use them in housing projects installed by the mafia.

Anyone who is going to put time and effort into a hardcore punk band nowadays has to be completely committed to nothing but sarcastic parody and satirical insanity. I see the joke band as no longer reserved for the 30-plus crowd of jaded douchebags and 13 year olds who really like Gwar, now being taken up by people who would have started crap like Saetia 10 years ago. While I admit those people have equal potential to be a bunch of twits, I also think the same amount of effort into trying to be some alternate version of cool can be used to produce something ultimately dorky.

Crap, I totally failed at talking about loved ones dying and all the emotional energy I was trying to gather up went right into getting excited about thoughts of bands dressing up like the cast of *Welcome Back Kotter* and singing songs about Puerto-Rican Jewish holidays. Lets all keep this sort of thing up for at least the next ten years!

Music, to me, has always been about getting laid. When that first feral caveman started pounding a hard rock on the skull of some thrice raped now sacrificed post-virginal vixen, realizing with a start that the staggered rhythm he was beating sounded much like when he laid her, a seed was implanted in man's cozmic thinkweb that continues to bear fruit and fruits to this day. Take, for instance, the chanting rhythm tribal dance circle that the Indians, pardon me Native Americans were doing prior to genocide and perhaps still are practicing today (look for the new LP on Mississippi that is just a boot of a Folkways comp from the '80s with "mysterious" [hipster] art). When Pocahontas' hundredth times great grandma's gold flecked eyes locked gaze with the top stud across the circle, who felt his tanned and muscled member stir under his loincloth as he realized that it wasn't her far out figure that was grabbing him it was her full and womanly pipes, the seed bore it's salty, musky fruit. Then a long time later you got a grizzled pockmarked old Negro blues creep singing about that young juicy spot located slightly below the navel and between those soft silk thighs which is made all the creepier cuz once she's his wife and he beats her with a hammer (the men don't know…) But that old fuck-tree was in full bloom by then, showering the ground beneath it (the open mouths of the sweaty public) with its wet, slimed-up fruit.

Cut ahead through time and space and you get today, the now, and the landscape is goddamn depressing, dry as the white dunes of the Sahara on a bad day in August. Sometime in the mid eighties rock'n'roll and fucking both went south and sour, hollowed out and left empty. Neither has recovered fully. You can trace the descending lines of music and sex as one, for the two are intrinsically linked, dropping in free-fall. The reasons behind this depression are varied-from the hollow drum recording techniques favored in those years to the simple decline in quality of rock and roll in general, my lifetime has been filled with tepid bland bullshit that halfheartedly grope at bygone eras. Eras which aren't forgotten, for who among us doesn't have piles of shitty books like *We Got the Neutron Bomb* or the disappointing *Creem* anthology to remind you and me that once upon a time, people did indeed play with guitars and had talent that run circles around what's happening now. At the same time music was slipping, so was fucking. Sex in the fifties was every male thinking, "I cannot be a faggot—I cannot be a faggot" ad nauseum until they stuck it to next door neighbor/best friend's little sister in the back of a Studebaker up on Handjob Point. Sex in the sixties was the miniskirt blues, followed swiftly by fucking in the mud pit at Woodstock, or the whole nation losing its collective hard on at Altamont. I told you cretins before; sex and music are hand in hand. Don't believe me? Look at the facts: Rock'n'roll was great through the fifties, sixties, seventies and the first part of the eighties. So was sex. The fifties were shaky on both accounts; the sex part I mentioned above and the music part with its Pat Boones and rockabilly (yech!). Things really started cooking in the sixties. At the beginning of the decade gals were "outtasight" and even shit head guys stopped hitting them with the fervor of the fifties. By the mid-sixties free love was happening and everyone was getting laid, which proves that with excess comes a price, and bands like the Grateful Dead started getting cocky. The seventies brought coke and 'ludes into the public consciousness and it was better fucking through chemicals and the Stooges (plus Black Sabbath, if you have no taste). And then it came to be, ruining everything.

The first wave of shit rock punk came about in 1976 with bands that I don't even have to mention by name. But I will, so let's take the Sex Pistols or even the Damned for instance: They had no punk (as it came to be known) to rip-off, so they cadged riffs off the Monkees and the Stooges and made them louder. This amplified thievery, for some reason, blew peoples minds (pardon the parlance). Previously, loud and out rock'n'roll

came in the form of that vile drip drudge known as heavy metal, a type of music whose main audience (sixteen year old, acne-scarred half-virgins) could not play unless they locked themselves in their room with a Fender and tore their fair fingers to shreds, callusing them up enough to ensure they'd never touch a tit unless they formed a big rock band like, oh wow, Jimmy Page did. Most males did not get laid around this time because people like the aforementioned L.Z. guitarist and a whole host of his big-dicked boyfriends were screwing the fucking snot out of every twelve to twenty year old in the tri-city Area and beyond. Your average Steve Rickonski on the street had no shot in sticking it to the local lust object unless he could play guitar. So when punk came around and smacked everybody in the solar plexus with its two chord easy to play you only need three fingers (on both hands combined) you-too-can-play-in-a-band ethos, and even Steve Rickonski (who has since assumed the nom de plume "Ripp Fuk") could get behind it and maybe behind a coupla those sleazy punk broads, too. So two problems were solved by the invention of punk—there were a lot of bands that did not sound like Led Zepplin and people could have more sex (both men and ladies). But this constant fuck utopia started choking the talent, and when punks started listening solely to punk, the quality in bands sharply declined. Things had simply gotten too good, and laziness set in. Another song about nuclear war, another song about Ronald Reagan, "Fuck you ma, fuck you dad!" (As if that eternal sentiment could get old—it came real fucking close, though.) What was the point of even talking to a girl? I'm here for the crew! With the hardcore-takes-over mentality of the young American male, women became useless, at least when compared to "the pit" or how many chains you can wrap around those engineer boots. You can barely even call it homoerotic, or homosexual, because there's no sex in the equation. In their defense, you can't exactly sing about girls with any real power over a one-two-thrash beat, but let's look at reality: Nuclear war did not happen, but girls (especially young ones) do. The Dicks were smart. I'm sure Gary Floyd got his Young Boys Feet, but I have a sneaking suspicion that Mike Muir never shot Reagan. (Maybe by "I Shot Reagan" he meant, "I am basically the Mexican version of a Juggalo.")

Meanwhile, outside of punk, things were getting worse all over. We had elected the ugliest president since Nixon and people everywhere looked goddamn disgusting. Everything and everyone was hideous in the eighties, and it was always too hot out. People talked like retards and nobody got laid except for my mother, apparently. The nineties weren't much better if you had fucking on the mind. Antioch College. Everyone got really dumpy. The tunes stunk too—when Nirvana gave heroin-dick to the entire world and not one person could cum, but the alternative to that (Guns and Roses and the like) was too rape-y for anyone to really get their juices flowing. Let's not even talk about the kind of bullshit "punk" they had going on then, either. I know some of you guys like that stuff, because you were young then and you're old now and thinking about that reminds you of all the vegan cookies you made and letters to *Maximum* you wrote, but seriously, get lost. Those wretched nineties continued until around 2003, when Spazz and DS-13 (and "Rock'n'roll," "Garage," "Punk") all kinda fell asleep. Hardcore became good for four years and now every band sounds like Sex Vid. Punk rock is really popular because the Black Lips are cute. Girls are pretty good looking, even if guys are starting to look sort of weird. Look, I finished my column.

This month, I'm going to take a break from story telling and reminiscing by writing about some influential records that many readers may have looked over. These records are easy to find in cutout bins. Most look rather non-descript and fall in the flips between various Destroy and Straight to Hell records. As far as I know, no information on these bands exists. I just can't find anything. I don't think I have ever paid more than three dollars for any of them, but I value these priceless gems.

Box Closed – *King Goober in Goober World* EP (Talent-less Susie Records, released in 1986): Box Closed was from North Dakota and played a really interesting primitive grind-core mixed with dub. I found this record at Double Decker in Allentown in the depths of the dollar record box. The cover is a typical two-tone checkered background with a demon with a question mark for a face ripping through. The back shows a photograph of the band at a diner.

Mama's Family – Can't Stand My Prick b/w My Prick Stank (Fuckerhead Records, released in 1994): Mama's Family was a noise rock band from West Virginia. The name of the band is crudely written on the front cover along with various cut out body parts from magazines. I would say this band is somewhere between a cross of Mama Tick and Bonnie "Prince" Billy—really odd. The A-Side is a ripping, disrupted mess of a song while the B-Side is a very odd, lo-fi acoustic song—very haunting and reverbed out. I almost feel that the two songs were mistakenly matched at the pressing plant and the band just said "fuck it" and released it regardless.

The Human Fly and the Vault of Horror – *Did You Ever See the Brain Do That Before?* (The Human Fly and the Vault of Horror Records, released in 1972): Very over the top horror-themed proto-punk out of Tallahassee, Florida. This band is a culmination of all the "hip" music going on at this point but put into overdrive—psychedelic rock, soul, rock n roll, funk, etc. I swear that I had this record on the wrong speed the first time I listened to it, the music is so outrageously fast, I can't even describe it. Keyboards and organs madly thrashing while lyrics about intoxicated creeping ghouls and LSD moats are sung over the whirlwind sounds of The Human Fly and the Vault of Horror. I can't even listen to this thing without getting a throbbing headache.

Sir Lord – *I Can't Stand Being Around Buttheads* (Feeding Time Records, released in 1991): Really nice, mellow acoustic bedroom indie rock a la Sebadoh out of Idaho. Pretty depressing and desperate stuff, but with a tinge of humor added in there. There are four songs on the record: "I Can't Stand Being Around Buttheads" and "Dog Came Home Today," both on side one, are the humorous songs while side two has the songs of despair titled "Kettle Cooked" and "I Died." Cover shows a photograph of a black-and-white drenched out depiction of the singer-songwriter. Reminds me of a combination between R. Stevie Moore and Weird Paul or something that would have been released on Homestead Records. Found this record at Jerry's in Pittsburgh.

Root Beer – *Brickwall Art* (Root Beer Records, released in 1998): Indie rock with a fast-paced and high strung punk tinge from somewhere in Utah. I'm not really sure though. The hand writing and liner notes are very hard to read—scratchy, messy writing that is all over the place. No song-titles are listed and the lyrics are a mess. Xerox cover showing a faded photograph of a street corner, a garbage can is in the street, and a parked car has one door open. The record has seven songs with three on the first side and four on the second side. Root Beer has a great dynamic—really mellow, rambling indie rock mixed with fast blasts of pure anger. Only one person is listed for the song writing and instrumentation—"C. Warlow." I bet this would be really popular with the Terminal Boredom crowd. I found this at Sound on Sound in Austin, TX in the dollar bin.

Endnotes:

Cottonballman.

A Social Experiment

I was looking at the outline of Zee's face and there was an extra dimension, everything was moving diagonally upwards and back. Not just a physical dimension but an emotional dimension of terror. I shut my eyes and saw a cylindrical blue metal tunnel to fall into and get out of the house but it was floating, shifting angles. Layers of fluorescent dots in chains: blue, lavender, green. Remembering when I was younger and I couldn't sleep because of the same dots, thought it had something to do with the way I shut my eyes too tightly. I'd wake up screaming and my mother would soothe me back to sleep. Later it was my sister who was screaming, but first it was me, or maybe it was always us both until I stopped: I'd see faces in the navy blanket, eyes on my walls and the same terror, like something horrible was going to happen and I couldn't stop it. I used to think the dots related to atoms, that somehow I could see the structure of things. Afraid of the dark, had to keep my entire body covered, even my head, run for the light in terror if I needed to get up.

Everything in the room was flickering and shaking, no stillness except for my body. I was crying like I did when I was four, exact tone and everything. I wrote: *is it something to do with my father, his naked body*? Just that sentence, I mean that sentence among everything else, everything else I was feeling. Zee knew what it meant, he'd dated someone before who'd been sexually abused. He knew what it meant when there were places where I didn't want him to touch me, towards my neck or down my belly and I would freeze. I just thought that was sex: I leave, they can have fun. No one had ever noticed before.

Camelia, who lived with me and Laurie, was the first person who ever told me she was an incest survivor—do you see how lucky I was? How lucky to live in this house in the Mission, in a culture that talked about rape, a culture where we could go crazy and it was OK, it made sense, sometimes it was the only thing that made sense except sometimes it felt like we would get stuck and some of us did, but there was still so much potential. Zee and I fought because we didn't really understand one another, he'd grown up in a small town and so for a while it was hard for him to walk more than a few blocks on his own, I mean when he first moved to San Francisco and he was sharing my room and I would go out to the dance workshop and when I got home he hadn't gone anywhere, he wanted to get groceries, groceries were only a few blocks away, but he was worried he'd get lost. We fought because he would use words like nature. I would say: what do you mean by nature? Nature doesn't mean anything. We fought when he would disappear for several days into a new affair and neither of us were ever interested in monogamy but it was hard for me not to know what was going on, I just wanted him to tell me. I became his beautiful object, something bold to hold. But first we held each other and that was enough, there was so much in this physical intimacy I'd never experienced before, even if we couldn't figure out the rest at least we could rest, I mean when we weren't fighting.

Remember all those activist meetings where everyone was always tearing each other apart? I would sit so still, respond so calmly. But inside was a different story, the story of my childhood and that's when I realized I needed to take a break, I needed to figure out activism that felt like something else. This is when I started to realize I did that same thing to my friends, respect meant tearing them apart and this would take longer to unlearn.

I always had friends in different realms: the realm of activism, which intersected but kind of didn't intersect with Mission dyke culture, and then there was the club world, which didn't intersect with anything. Of course, we were all between worlds, but most people didn't want to be. One time I decided to have a big potluck, and invite my friends from all these places, I wanted to see if I could connect these worlds, I mean I wanted to feel connected. It was a disaster: my activist friends were silent; my club friends rambled on about outfits or music or the weather or how vegan food was kind of weird; everyone else just stared into space. One of our roommates who we rarely saw because he was in art school ended up getting smashed and chasing me down the stairs, grabbing me and trying to make out: I love you. I love you, he kept saying. We'd barely even had a conversation.

Afterwards, people accused me of conducting a social experiment, a few of my activist friends in particular—they were enraged; I didn't try that again. But that was our kitchen—people would flow in and out and entire relationships would be negotiated and transformed over that table between a curving sofa and the chairs we borrowed from a laundromat. Like with Andee, he entered our house passing flawlessly as a clueless rich kid, asking a lot of questions and everyone was vicious: we thought he wanted us to do his work for him. We didn't ask those kinds of questions, or if we did ask it was in a different way, a way that meant we'd always known, even when we were learning. Andee came from Seattle as an official queer youth working for the American Friends Service Committee—in Seattle their project was the queer youth center, but we couldn't figure out what they were doing in San Francisco, other than giving Andee a place to live in a rich neighborhood just above the Castro. When Andee started saying he was working class, everyone was aghast—who did he think he was kidding? When he dyed his hair blue, we thought he just looked like some prep with blue hair, like the guy he was dating. When he said he wanted to be vegan, we laughed.

Maybe I was shady: I forgot that we talked about house music, but I remember when Andee would talk about punk and I would change the subject. The other day I thought I should call the people who live in that apartment now, the one on Sycamore Street, I wanted to go back into that kitchen and see what I could find. I mean I did call them, at the same number we had sixteen years ago, I guess I still remember it. The phone rang, but no one answered.

My latest book is a novel, So Many Ways to Sleep Badly, *and yes unfortunately I'm still sleeping badly or even when I don't sleep badly I still feel terrible! Now I'm working on some crazy memoirish thing called* The End of San Francisco, *which the writing in this particular column might become a part of. Oh—and* lost-missing, *my public art project—I want to turn that into some kind of book-type thing also. And I recently finished a new anthology called* Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots? *I know you're wondering the same thing. You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past* MRR *columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.*

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

Alright, it's a whole new year. In Australia, we don't do the resolutions. We don't make promises, so we don't break promises. Hang your washing on the line, it's OK, the weather's fine.

The Americans invented Benjamin

Franklin, bulimia, the Taliban and new years resolutions, and along with inventing punk and hardcore, two traditions that sustain this rag and thus, (thanks to the exorbitant payload that goes towards columnists) my livelihood, I'm going to step in line with their other customs this year. So, allow me to unveil the all new "All Foreign Junk," the result of a new year's resolution I obviously had to make a couple months back when the deadline for this issue came, now with 80% more foreigners. The last couple years have provided many monthly distractions, but I consulted a real life American for the proper procedure to make this yearly ritual, sat down with a Christmas stocking and a rabbit's foot and wrote my resolution in blood on an apple pie, and it was this: Dear Abraham Lincoln, I promise this year to write more. To read more. And to explore the bizarre customs of the punk hardcore hellions of alien kultures with a greater vigor.

In recent columns, my efforts consisted of dissecting the small stack of records/tapes I had aside, throwing together complementary literary effluvia with the usual string of hyperbole, dashing it off with an apology for late deadline, kicking back in my outback hut to watch my pet kangaroo Vinnie Stigma hop past, patiently waiting for the check. My interests are now in developing this hyperbole into a string of paragraphs with a little more depth, so I'll limit to one item of each the following categories: cassette, vinyl, fanzine. Hopefully, I can provide a little more focus for you dedicated explorers of foreign lands, which basically, is my way of saying that I'll be stepping up in response to reader interest, please continue sending your products into my address, they are much appreciated, thanks for reading these last couple of years, don't be late, bench your weight, etc.

HUNGARIAN CASSETTE:

Part of the monthly *MRR* allowance goes towards travel expenses, so I took a quick educational trip to Hungary in order to report a little about the history, geography and politics of the country, to give a little context on how a punk scene could have, much like it is usually depicted by emaciated black clad young people, sprouted like a weed. I was detained at the border and put on the first plane out of Budapest for not having a media pass stamped in my passport. Thanks, *Maximum*.

On my arrival home, the new COMBAT ACTION TAPES label of international (i.e. Non-US) hardcore from Canada had sent me a package. This tape label has a pretty extensive staffing structure, but I managed to penetrate the interns and receptionists and exchange a couple of emails with the CEO, who sings for the Toronto hardcore band of uptight metropolitan architecture observers, URBAN BLIGHT and showed some interest in Australian hardcore happenings. I wanted to thank him for sending me the RAKOSI tape.

RAKOSI provide a selection of ten songs of dense, hyperactive hardcore. The recording is either un-mastered, or excessively weirdly mastered, as the levels dance all over the place and from channel to channel, so it's a pretty disorienting listen. I would compare it to the sound of recently booted early New York hardcore demos, when they wore chains and were finding their feet after ripping heavily on the BAD BRAINS joint. The sound is putrid, with cymbals crashing through like someone is throwing crockery around the studio. But this is good, people. Good shit.

My advice to you is to track down COMBAT ACTION TAPES through the hints I've thrown at you in the above catalogue. If this is anything to go by, this will be a quality label to watch out for.

SPANISH VINYL:

The fastidious reader will note a number of issues back I goose-stepped around the pages in praise of Spanish punk band COPRALITOS and their killer debut 7". Their label responded favorably to my praise and sent me their new 7" and a 7" from SILLA ELECTRICA. So as not to repeat myself excessively, I will summarize the COPRALITOS experience: catchy Spanish '70s styled punk, much like their first record.

The SILLA ELECTRICA *Tension* 7" could be similarly summarized. The best reference points would be ANGRY ANGLES and GORILLA ANGREB, though, for both bands, the reference point that everybody leant on was X, who got by on the novel experience of having two people singing at you with a similarly medicated, downer tone that apparently summed up the experiences of living in Hollywood. I have always found them quite tedious to listen to for the most part, but I can hear it in a couple of their songs. The bottom line is, I like the dual vocal approach, I think other bands did it better, and those other bands included ANGRY ANGLES and GORILLA ANGREB and now they include SILLA ELECTRICA, who I will qualify here differ greatly from the X template with vivacious vocal delivery, dual guitars and no bass.

What seems to characterize modern Spanish punk and hardcore that gave Copenhagen such devoted attention in the mid years of last decade (that was great to write!) is the consideration they place on the sound of their records. From INVASION to SILLA ELECTRICA, these bands have a great idea of how to make a punk record sound alive, and the focus point with this record is the two guitar sounds, as they are relying on them to hold enough weight that your ear won't miss the sensual throb of an errant bass. I'm not talking about TELEVISION-esque histrionics, as they largely play power chords and stray away from the winding intricacies of typical dual guitar nerdists, but at a loud volume these two tones have a nice interplay. The ANGRY ANGLES comparison earlier is probably the best I can do, a compliment to their sound as this largely overlooked Memphis punk band released a series of incredible 7"s that SILLA ELECTRICA's would sound at home within.

ENGLISH FANZINE:

The UK fanzine *Niche Homo* has just hit its third issue, and while the musical content has definitely strayed further from *MRR* territory with this issue, it's important to celebrate the fact that A) there is a music based fanzine B) there is a music based fanzine that has managed to make it past two issues C) there is a music based fanzine that exists outside Australia and has managed... (etc.) *Niche Homo* will appear to those readers who favor UK DIY punk and those areas of punk that use less distortion and more jangle, or those areas of punk which brush shoulders with the less career aspirational indie rock types. In 2009, there were signs that an international fanzine renaissance was developing as the printed word started to interest more than confused luddites, and people awakened from somatic slumber, reminded of the important of the printed fanzine as cultural artifact and (superior) toilet reading. *Niche Homo* was one of many tree-haters leading the charge away from the interweb and back towards archaic print, and if you are reading *MRR* and you're interested in this column, I am sure that their new issue will interest you. I f you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you don't live in the US, Japan or Sweden, please get in touch. My address is: Daniel Stewart, PO Box 239 North Carlton Victoria 3054 Australia. If you'd like to email me, try distortheworld@gmail.com.

Everyday I sprawl on the lawn before class, pretending to read, but actually scanning the courtyard for punks or near-punks, somebody to relate to, to give my already reread and well worn new issue of *MRR*.

I finally saw them. A couple with matching green splotches of hair in the "it's cheaper to share dye, even if we're all matchy after" kind of way, which is adorable, in

small doses. As they got closer I saw they were shinier and cleaner than they first seemed, with matching white creepers and Horrorpops shirts (BTW, who the fuck are they? Anybody?), I gave them the nod. Punks are punks, right? He arched a brow at my faded Dystopia shirt and rolled his eyes. It was out of a movie about high school. I know it's never cool to be the new kid, but really?

I suddenly found myself the crotchety old punk wondering about what punk has come to. "Who are the punks these days? Seems like we can't trust to find each other on the street anymore. Some people look punk, but aren't down; some people don't look so punk anymore, but are." I grumbled on this way all the way to class, disappointed.

"Lyra, are you punk?"

"I don't know, mommy." Lyra is slouched way down in her car seat trying to pull one of her little cowgirl boots off.

Her mom, Kristina, smoothes a loose lock of her hair back into a barrette. "Yeah. I know what you mean kid, I don't know either."

Lyra scrunches her little face for a moment then looks at us seriously and says, "We'll see when I'm bigger."

Kristina is a wide seven months pregnant, with sneaky eyes and a bright smile. Last time she was pregnant she used to make me laugh by drinking water out of tall cans at parties and seeing how many dirty looks she would get. We'd laugh even harder when no one gave her shit for it. When she got pregnant the first time, she moved back in with her parents in Orange County. So she knows just how I'm feeling right about now.

My decision to become a nurse, though it has felt right, has wreaked havoc on my life. I am living in the house I grew up in with my cranky, aging father, in a town I once swore to hate for all time, away from almost everyone I know, and am daily forced to battle the boredom and bureaucracy that is community college.

"I don't know, I just don't feel that punk sometimes," Kristina continued, "I was dating this kid, and he was so obsessed with being punk, he had to print designs on his jacket and fill it up with patches before he could wear it out. I don't know, it just seemed so stupid. How are we punk? I mean, I know we are—we don't look it so much these days, but we are right?"

Tina may not feel so punk anymore, but she's more punk to me now than she was a few years ago as just yet another wastoid in Oakland. She's studying to be a librarian, and is getting really into Chicano Studies, interviewing her friends and fellow activists about racist gang-injunction legislation that targets brown people. She is a mom in a time when I can't imagine trying to hope for a future.

This is the age, the point in life I feel like most people lose touch with punk. Insecure because school, or motherhood, or a new life situation has pulled their community out from under them, they become lonely, or resentful that punk has not grown into their new more complex life with them.

I am here to say that you're still punk, even if you don't feel like patching up your jacket anymore, even if you don't only cut your hair when you are black out drunk anymore, even if you don't recognize all the names on the cover of this rag anymore. You can participate as much or as little as you want to. Just because you want something else, doesn't mean you have to stop being punk.

It is society that has branded punk a youthful rebellion, as a passing phase. It is society that has told us that punk is a kid thing, something you grow out of if you want to do "important things" or "grown up things." Just like with every other assumed truth society at large has dictated, I call bullshit.

We need to redefine punk to encompass who we are as whole people. So you don't need to be a punk-hyphen. Punk-mom, punk-lawyer, punk-yogi, punk-chef, punk-whatever. Punk should be big enough to include all these ways of being and to represent us at any age.

If you see your friends drifting away, feeling cut off or dissatisfied with punk, make them a mix tape, remind them it's less about how we look and what we do individually, and more about who we are and what we care about and do as a community.

When I'm feeling cut off and punkless, which is a lot lately, I just think about all of my inspiring friends and all the things they are gonna do to change the world, and to change our idea of what a punk is and can be. I think about all the punks I know, or know of, who are working toward something better. Working as teachers, community organizers, herbal healers, doulas, women's choice clinic phlembotomists, and those going back to school to become public interest lawyers, nurses, doctors. I feel good knowing that somebody else was bitten by the same bug.

I think of Lyra becoming bigger, deciding what she'll be.

I think of all of the punks in my community I just haven't met yet. We'll find each other. I'll be in the dirty Dystopia shirt (seriously, most of the time).

And I think of Ivy the last time I saw her, singing at the Clarion Alley Block Party, sagely reminding us that "what we want is what we'll get."

To get in touch: first there's arielawesome@gmail.com, and then there's arielawesome.blogspot.com. You choose. Put paper letters in a bottle and throw them in the garbage, you've got a better shot of it getting to me that way than with the ocean.

"Tell me about how your mom handled it," says Jane, as I visit her at St. Vincent's Hospital with Scooter a few months back. She had just found out she had less than two months to live. It turned out to be less than two weeks.

"Well," I say, as Scooter, my yorkie, licks her sweet face and drowns her in kisses, "I wrote a story a while back about it... let me read it to you!"

I turn on my Palm Centro, find the right file, and begin to read.

Jane smiles that "all knowing smile" and God, do I miss her.

And my mom.

And as sick as I am, I hope I don't see them too soon...

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It was one of those cold April days where your breath still hung in the air after you finished talking. The sun, along with our winter jackets, kept us warm on our walk along 34th Street until we reached Macy's. As we entered the place, I could feel that stuffy, uncomfortable warmth that always seems to hug big department stores in the city during the winter. With me was my step-dad, Nick, and my mom, Barbara. She had only a few months to live because of the fast progression of the lung cancer she was diagnosed with some months earlier. She had finished many rounds of chemo, and was now ending her radiation treatments at Sloan-Kettering.

The reason we had ventured to Macy's that day was, well, odd. We had gone there to buy her a wig. The cancer had spread from her lungs, throughout her entire body, and was now in her head. Her brain. This is called metastasis. Nice word for an ugly thing. Actually, there are lots of nice words that are used with cancer. To *soften* the blow. Wonderful.

As we walked through the ground floor of Macy's toward the rear elevators, I could smell all the perfumes and after shaves. But somehow, they didn't linger in my nose like they usually did. All I could smell was the stuffy uncomfortableness of the place.

We got off the elevator at the third or fourth floor and followed the signs to the wig department. It was just a couple of enclosed glass cabinets adjacent to each other, tucked away in a far corner of Macy's.

Behind one of the counters stood an older gentleman, and behind him, various wigs

placed stylishly upon Styrofoam heads that were faceless and eyeless.

The man's smile was warm as he greeted us. Nick and I smiled back, but my mother didn't. There was a woman trying on wigs in front of a tabletop mirror, and when she saw us, she turned and smiled. We smiled back to her as we watched her adjust the wig on her head, with the price tag hanging off the back and all. My mom, again, didn't smile.

"It's all right sweetie," said the woman to my mom, "everything is gonna be all right." My mom, with a scarf covering her quickly balding head just nodded.

"You'll get used to it," she added, "really, you will."

I looked at Nick, and he looked at me. And we both smiled. But they weren't real smiles. They were smiles of fear, and desperation. We didn't know what else to do.

"Which one should I get?" asked my mom to Nick and I. We had trouble understanding what she said at first because her tongue was swollen from all the chemo and radiation and shit.

We looked at the wall of faceless heads for a long time not saying anything. The reason my mom had wanted a wig was because I had planned a trip to Cancun with my brothers, Wendy, Nick and I that was to take place in a couple of weeks. I figured it would be our last chance to all be together, and of course, I was right. I fucking hate being right.

Nick and I and my mom looked at the wigs, and to tell you the truth, I had no fucking clue which one she should get. There were black straight ones. There were blonde curly ones. They even had a punk rock colored one. Somehow, I didn't think my mom wanted that one.

"Nice wigs, huh?" said the woman in front of the tabletop mirror, "I already have a couple, this is going to be my third!"

Nick and I just looked at her and smiled. My mom seemed off in a daze.

"It's really not that bad," explained the woman, "in fact, your mother can have the hair she has always wanted".

We nodded our heads, and I was surprised Nick didn't make any bad jokes. I guess it just wasn't one of those days.

We continued to look at all the wigs, lost in our frustration over this insane situation. A situation we thought we'd never find ourselves in. Ever.

"Why don't you describe the kind of hair your mother used to have?" said the woman to me. And to Nick.

Nick and I began to describe it to her as my mom stood there, listening. We explained that her hair was brownish-blonde and very, very beautiful. As Nick started to explain the texture and feel of it, I could see his emotions tearing him apart. He knew he'd never feel or smell the real stuff again. I felt tears welling up in my eyes, and saw them in Nick's.

It was then I think my mom somehow snapped out of that cancer-morphine haze, and told Nick and I to go shopping, and to leave her alone at the wig counter. She told Nick to take me to the electronic games department, and buy me whatever I wanted. She told us to come back in a little while, and she'd be fine.

Nick and I walked away from my mom, the woman with the wigs, and the guy behind the counter, feeling very uncomfortable. We did not want to leave her alone, so we didn't. We just went around the corner, and peeked over at her ever few seconds.

I watched my mom try on all sorts of wigs. As she would try each one on, she'd look in the mirror and brush the hair as if it were her own. The man behind the counter smiled warmly at her as she brushed the various wigs she was trying on. I could see in the way that she brushed and stroked the hair, that she missed her own, and was feeling what it was like to have a full head of hair again. I quickly wiped a tear from my cheek, hoping Nick didn't see it.

Finally my mom put on a wig, and wore it for more than a few minutes. She just kept staring at herself in the tabletop mirror, and brushing and caressing the hair. The man behind the counter just smiled, and the woman who was trying on other wigs was telling my mom she looked great in it.

Nick and I walked back to the wig department and to my mom. When she saw us, she smiled A warm smile. A smile I'll carry with me forever. On her head was a wig that looked exactly like her hair. Only it was shorter than she had worn it recently. It was the kind of hair style she had worn about twenty years earlier. And it made her look younger. Like the mom I remember when she pushed me on the swing set. Or when I sat in her lap. Or when she bathed me. The same hair. The same mom. She was beautiful. Like a mother. She was beautiful. Like a woman.

I felt a lump begin to rise in the back of my throat, and looked at my mom. She looked at me, and suddenly I wanted to be in her arms. To be hugging her, cradled in her warmth. Safe from the world. I wanted to be home again. The lump in my throat got bigger. My mom looked me in the eyes, then put her finger to her lip. And I knew all was said that had to be.

I'll never forget my mom and that wig, that cold winter day at Macy's. That day my mom had stood up in the face of all that was wrong, and had reminded Nick and I about pride and courage. She had tried on wigs, majestically, and somehow, with synthetic material on her head, had shown us the true meaning of beauty. She took away our uneasiness and fears with just the smallest of a smile, and let us know that life was worth living.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. I have said it before, and I'll say it again, as loud as I can, Jello Biafra has been more accurate than that Nostradomos fellow. And a lot smarter, too. That being said, his new album, *The Audacity Of Hype* is nothing short of amazing. I like this album. A lot. In fact, I love it. He went back to his Dead Kennedys roots with his new band, The Guantonimo School Of Medicine and the result is an album almost as great as *Plastic Surgery Disasters*, my favorite of DK's album. The music here is surfy/creepy/heavy, and the lyrics are dead on. The tune, "Electronic Plantation" is so cool, so original, and so right on. The whole album does not preach to the converted as later DK albums and spoken word albums and Lard did. It brings up *new* ideas that are so fucking smart. Right on, Jello! I'd have to say this *is* the best punk rock album of the new century. Fast, Furious, and super funny and sick and clever. Get this. Now.
2. It's worth repeating. Get the new Jello Biafra album.
3. Other cool CDs I've got recently include Anvils *This Is Thirteen*. See the move, then you'll understand why this is such a hysterical album. Yay!!! They Might Be Giants have a new out called *Here Comes The Science*. While the band is not that punk rock, in lots of ways, they are more punk than most. The album as simple tunes, much like the Ramones, that are educational, great for kids and adults a like, and most of all, catchy. I never really got into these guys, but after hearing this, I'm gonna go back and check out their earlier stuff.
4. It's almost holiday season, and some *great* video games are being cranked out. For the Nintendo DS, check out the new *Wizard Of Oz* rpg. I know, licensed stuff usually sucks. But this is cool and fun for all ages. You can rename Dorothy, The Tin Man, The Lion and The Scarecrow to give them punk rock names, and the game is really addicting. But *nothing* compares to the greatness of Nintendo's *Mario & Luigi - Bowser's Inside Story*! Another game for the DS... You play as those silly Eye-Tallion brothers and this time you also get to play as Bowser, the stupid and funny Turtle King! This RPG is one joke after another and it's so clever it had me laughing so hard I messed up on some levels! Really fun and the bad guy, "Fawful", a returning character, is probably the funniest boss in a video game, ever. Also check out "Marvel Superhero Squad" for the DS. It's much more fun that the depressing *Marvel Ultimate Alliance*. Although *Superhero Squad* is geared more towards kids, it doesn't crash like the other title, and actually makes sense. It is sad though, to think that Disney purchased Marvel. Spiderman working for the mouse somehow just doesn't sit right, ya know?
5. For the Xbox 360 comes the best *rock* game,

ever. *Brutal Legend*, with the voices of Jack Black and lots of famous heavy metal dudes including Ozzy and Lemmy, from Motorhead. This game is punk rock! You run around playing your guitar and killing evil bad guys. The game looks like it came straight from an Abstract Expressionist painting, killer landscapes and machine/human hybrids as well. I love this game. It is kinda short, but so fucking clever. It is more about heavy metal... but gives us hope there will be a "punk rock" version one day. The idea of "headbangers" being used as a weapon is so clever, as is the evil bosses in this game, who are record executives. Right on!

Another cool title I got is *Beatles Rock Band*. That one is self-explanatory. Great visuals, great game-style, and even greater tunes. You can't lose. And then there are some new "Arcade" titles for the Xbox360 like *Zombie Apocalypse*, which is run. Like the 1970s title, *Robotron*, you run around killing zombies with your joystick using chainsaws, machine guns, and other cool explosives. You can play against others for a high score and the game is more addicting than crack. Also check out *Ion Assault* and *Madballs* which are fun arcade titles that will take you hours to master, and hold a lifetime of fun. I love this new technology shit!!! Oh, the new *Wolfenstein* for the 360 and Playstation3 blows my socks off. There is nothing more fun than killing nazis, and this game has plenty of them to go around! Even some Nazi Zombies. Yeah!!!!

6. www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb

I CAN'T TAKE IT NO MORE, I'M BUGGIN' OUT.

I'm marching out of revolving glass doors on the ground floor of the building I work in. Worked in. It's the sixth of July 2009 and I have just quit my job to go on tour with the Shitty Limits. In this weirdly un-British helter-swelter, London feels like holiday. Stepping out onto Leicester Square I seem to have entered some kind of parallel world. Hordes of determined looking youth are jostling for space, crowding around the steps of my work. Getting closer, I can see they're school kids. All from different schools, seemingly? They're shouting. I am disorientated and a bit disturbed, until it becomes obvious what's going on. Leicester Square is London's crap version of Sunset Blvd., a "cinema quarter," much less cultural than that sounds, and these are Harry Potter fans, hundreds of them. Dogged with a look of steely defiance mixed with exhaustion, they're all Hogwarts colors, handmade everything and underdeveloped ribs pressed against the barriers, preemptively rolled out, as they do for every Tom, Dick and Jonas brother. Lightning bolts gouged into tweenage foreheads. Radcliffe and related cartel aren't due for a good six hours. It's fucking tribal. Three girls I lock eyes with are crying. Already. This is fandom. I get on my bike. We could really learn something.

I'm flummoxed, really. Everyone else may have Better records, bigger cities wilder times. I wish I could write like Brace but frankly I don't have the liver for it. I tried to think about what I know about. After some serious brain defrag, it's been decided: other than heavy interest in (not always backed up by knowledge of) my two specialist subjects: New York hardcore and Thomas Pynchon, all I've really learnt in the last two years is related to the job I have just quit. There's a peculiar terror in that, but hey, a little background: Aged fifteen, yes I had a skateboard, but it was cheap, I was/am clumsy, the boys just thought I was stupid, so instead as a bored teenagers do these days, I got good at using the computer. Somewhere between graduating a degree in English and Cultural Studies (the study of whatever you bloody well please) and the dole queue (they don't even really make you queue) I got told there might be money in all that screen time. I sunk my freakishly small, blunt teeth into that, and to cut to the chase, spent eighteen months of my young adult life working in a public relations firm. This became reading and writing about 'digital and social media engagement' (amongst many other marginally less vacuous, more intensely technological things) for one of London's top firms. I went to events, stood on the sidelines of this whole new weird subculture of blogger meetups (subcultural only in as much as "the wider populace would think you're a fucking moron") and smiled at the men and women there: mostly jolly, but deeply desperate, weirdly promiscuous functioning alcoholics comparing smartphones and reveling in a who's who of status-update status-anxiety. There were moments when I started to believe it, present it, the bosses liked it. They viewed me as putting an amiable face to the blind panicked fear that these "new channels" and represented to thousand greasy execs–turning bilious and pale as they realized this might be one hurdle too far. One week I trained fifty people how to use fucking fucking fucking twitter, saddened as they gripped hard at their employability in the face of not-so-empty threats from management about new requirements to be a "digital native."

I started to reach capacity. Resentment bubbled over as I heard my own mouth spout more and more convincingly about *viralising* and *seeding*. It's no accident that these terms bring to mind some kind of dribbling heinous future semen; dried up, impotent and full of dead ideas. Smeared it all over everything that is ostensibly useful about the internet, giving it that predictable echo chamber glisten. Every time some "blogger" typed, it was fodder for a brand awareness graph, algorithms to measure sentiment. Me. My mother, the woman who, some seven years ago, executed a military level u-turn on discovering pink hair dye in amongst her sixteen year old daughter's purchases on the way home from the shops, now responds to my plaintive moans at being effectively trapped in a world of vacuous pricks, with her honeyed intones of, "but Bryony, you're a punk, you're meant for better than all this." Head hits palm. Did I hate every second? No, but I'm tormented by how lucky I am every day anyway (so should you be), so I'll tick off the ability to piss bile about choices I made for myself as another middle class privilege. I guess. Time off to play shows and do other real things felt like lovely, monochrome relief from the 56 million colors bombarding information super duper next level two-dot-oh-god-please-no world of my work. I'd always tutted inwardly at the nine-to-five, admin, hate-my-job overtones of the messageboard addicted mid-30s punks, I thought it was a clever ruse, that having a *real* career to go with the label and the band and the shows would be a lucrative accoutrement, the punkest jugglers act, but only dropped balls ensued, and there are some things not up for sacrifice. I can still make things with codes, but all that shit loses its luster when you have to deliver fifty deck power point slides on what some dipshit blogger who can't fucking spell said about Adidas. Or Hamleys. Or business process management software. I'm not kidding. I'm on the run. Digitally. And I hate how that sounds too. Knowing how SEO works (AKA the ability to terminally scupper myself by having an unusual real life name) only makes me more determined. Still, even under duress, you try saying the anonymous onandonandonanist. Viralise that, fuckheads.

Despite my nose-as-viewfinder talk here, to my employers, it seems I dipped out graciously with the promise of an MA (I got an unconditional offer, but its still five thousand pounds I don't have) and by the time this is published, I guess will be penniless and shaped like a human burrito after three weeks with Logic Problem and the Shitty Limits. Tell me you wouldn't do the same. While the clear desk policy puts paid to grandiose "shit on it and run" notions, I'm working out my notice with clenched fists and resolutely leaving this particular breed of suckers in their rancid gold dust. Willfully, then, this is the new poor.

This is the new poor. And without a proper job, I guess I'll be sticking to tar babies mp3s, and patch up my self-worth, whichever way.

Last night (fresh wounds FYI) I put a hardcore punk gig on in an arch under London Bridge station. I called it Big Takeover. It was a mixed bill (Logic Problem, Shitty Limits, Mob Rules, Black Time, Ironclad and Nowhere Fast). I made it all ages, bring your own booze, and 200 people showed up. There are reasons why all of this is unusual, much of which I think I covered in that scene report, but that's all by the by. What was, to attendees, by all accounts, a night to rejuvenate something that's been lacking here for a long time, was, for me, the promoter, irrevocably marred by constant harassment from the venue owner, who seemed like a "regular" guy (who responded to London's version of craigslist with news of an empty space that may be "suitable for my event") but revealed himself that night to be nothing short of an absolute wanker. I've dipped toes into the stagnant water that is putting on gigs over the last five years, but nothing to compare to this in terms of scale. I was excited, energized. I put up a 500 pound (what, like 850 dollars?) damage deposit. I was an idiot.

So now, this venue guy is sending threatening emails, wanting to withhold my damage deposit plus bill me thousands. We stayed 'til three a.m. cleaning and that place was spotless. There was no more than 100 worth of "damage"—including labor. I hate him, I hate him. I hate that he treated me so differently to my taller, maler friends who reasoned with him so easily. I hate that I let myself feel threatened. That I started to feel like this was too much for one person. I hate that I couldn't see any of the bands, because he was shouting in my ear the whole night that I couldn't catch up with the people who'd traveled. That people got turned away. That I was still trying to be pleasant to him as he snakes an arm around my waist and thanks me for doing his washing up with a weird snarl. I made one thousand two hundred pounds and gave every penny to the bands because that's the way I wanted to do things, only to be told that I should have kept it, to deal with this eventuality. That a man who runs a space banging on about health and safety, shouting in my face, should think that a rusty screw for the main door handle is acceptable. One of my sillier friends, wasted and backed up with the ultimate "it's a punk rock show" illegitimate defense, threw a cymbal stand at head height into the crowd. I was distraught as we bundled the guy (he was from France and it was his first show in London, great time) into a cubicle. Venue guy barged in, threw a first aid kit (complete with scissors) at my face and stormed out. So he's screaming in my face as the injured party pisses blood up the toilet wall, staring me down and blocking my path and I am a five foot five, twenty three year old woman that has given him half her monthly salary, and he is a sociopath, dishonest, power-tripping, cringy, fucking, bastard. Oh and a secret Christian, I found a ring bound notebook on a desk in his office, with a crucifix daubed on the front in tippex (maybe you call it whiteout) the book was full of prayers scrawled in a disjointed cursive he's all 'dear god, I won't enjoy tonight, but don't let me fuck it up'—I clench weaker fists at 2 a.m. whilst my best friends clean his floor and he shouts at them about the best way to wield a mop, then thinks he's being funny asking my friend Keg if he's "the token Asian?" He's claiming I'm in breach of a contract I never signed, that too many people were there, that I'm responsible for the guys that pissed in the street. For the "nuisance" caused to neighbors who were hanging out with my friends outside. My friend Jen is a doctor, and even he knew better than her, because calling the ambulance when the French guy started to pass out was "putting his business in jeopardy." *Gah.* Still, I went to a show the next night and there were kids there who'd never been before, who'd picked up flyers at Big Takeover, who were kinda wide eyed and wanted to say hi. Maybe it's trite to say so, and I'm no martyr, but if it made anyone at all feel like there's something left of punk in this city more than brand-backed indie, free-association fuzz hipsters and the odd irono-DJ, it might all end up being worth it. For now I'll stay incandescent and penniless.

A word in your shell-like (some UK-OK recommendations): Read *Futility Exercise* #1 and crank proudly, listen to Black Mamba Beat and burn your boat shoes, get the *Kingdom of Fear* 7" compilation and basically just slamdance, watch *Phoenix Nights* with some garlic bread, listen to Sex Dungeon and do the Fritzl stomp. I'm going to America tomorrow, when this is in print (scary) I'll be back, so I hope you said hello.

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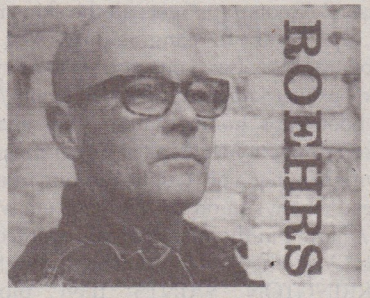


ANNIHILATION TIME

You punks are in luck! Brandon and Lauren and their No Way Records have a ripping new LP prepared for you! SOCIAL CIRCKLE from Boston, Massachusetts has entitled their new long-player *City Shock*. SOCIAL CIRCKLE comes out of their corner swinging! The title cut is first up and this motherfucker rocks! The bleak lyrics could apply to many people you have known: "Life's got him beat / He's all leering eyes and gnashing teeth / No real friends and he's all alone / Age creeps up and hopes fade away / He's just another sad face on the subway train / He's got city shock." Whoa! Those are dark lyrics—sad but true! The second song, "Finger on the Switch," bemoans the fact that we have warmongers running the country and they have the ability to destroy civilization as we know it. Song number three is a punk rock gem! It's called "Third Shift" and some of the words are: "Can't get a normal job / You're getting up when it's dark outside / It's the only way to survive / Hate this life and you just can't cope / You're working nights and you've lost all hope." There is another grim reality for these times we live in. We them slam through "Vacant Lot" and arrive at one of the best songs on the *City Shock* LP. "Drunk Cop" has a menacing punk rock guitar chug and cutting lyrics. Read on: "I saw you drinking on the job / Sitting in your cruiser, drinking beer you stole from the kid on the corner / You left him laying face down in the street." Yes! Those are harsh words!! Side one finishes with "What's So Great?" with lyrics such as: "There's nothing great about normal, normal thinking / And there's nothing great about you." That is a crystal clear criticism! Side two starts with a great song called "Out of Focus"; the guitars sneak up on you with a well-done instrumental introduction and then the song explodes into great hardcore! Some of the lyrics are: "Make it through another day / Pressure's mounting, might explode / I need a break, can't take this much / I street too much / Don't talk to me, can't take much more / You're one more detail to ignore." Excellent! Song two on this side is also very strong! "Problem Child" goes like this: "I'm only let out at night / My family keeps me out of sight / I spend all day locked away / No mind, no soul, my head's an empty hole / There's something wrong with me—I'm a problem child." Now those are happy lyrics! We power on through another full-fledged punk rock song called "Pills" and then we get to "Under Suspicion." This song kicks a bunch of young punk rock butt! We end the second side with yet another well-honed punk song, "So Old": "Locked behind bars of my own design / People come and go, I'm just left behind / Try to get by and ignore the shit / Still addicted to the noise, the blood and the spit." Now that is a great song with poignant lyrics! This is a fucking punk rock masterpiece! Get your copy of SOCIAL CIRCKLE's *City Shock* from: No Way Records, 324 S. Pine St., Richmond, VA 23220, www.nowayrecords.com.

Fuck! All you skate-punks and surf-punks better hold on to your shorts! Scotty and his Tankcrimes Records, in conjunction with City Records, have released the heaviest slab of thrash/hard rock/skate punk that has crossed the threshold at *MRR* for many a moon! These Bay Area cretins go by the moniker FACE THE RAIL and skateboarding themes abound. This is some of the most complex hard-rock guitar playing witnessed since the untimely demise of ANNIHILATION TIME! Some of the members of FACE THE RAIL have played in E. COLI and NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE from Half Moon Bay. Song one on side A has a carefully wrought SUICIDAL TENDANCIES feel to it. The rhythm guitar and bass lines on the second song, "Foreign Land" might remind some older punks of those Sonoma, California miscreants the BODIES. Song three, "Burnt Out," features some of the best twin guitar attack heard on the street since THIN LIZZY or MOUNTAIN were still performing. Some of the lyrics of "Burnt Out" are: "My life is spinning out of control / I just need another drink so I can fucking think / I'm outta drugs, anxiety hits / I just need another hit before I get the shakes." Ouch! Those are lyrics that could possibly indicate some trouble in the near future! After "Burnt Out" you get "Trash Talk" with a scorching vocal that stops close to the urgency of AGNOSTIC FRONT's song "Power" on the best hardcore record ever made—1984's *Victim In Pain*. Some of the lyrics to "Trash Talk" are: "I hear what you say behind my back / Do you think I don't know? / I've caught you red-handed and now you are exposed / How come you won't say that shit to my face?" Good stuff! Side A finished with "Problem," bearing a convoluted mixture of guitar sounds and vocalizing. Side B starts with a rough-and-tumble skate-rock song called "Violence." This one is a fucking masterful blend of burning fretwork (see: HENDRIX) with punk melody that would do MINOR THREAT proud. The lyrics go like this: "There's violence in the streets / Some young punk is getting beat to the ground for being different / Everybody wants you to be the same / Is it your time? / Is it my time? / Who's gonna die? / Are we programmed to feel hate?" Those words are frighteningly accurate! Song two is "We Skate" wherein skating becomes an all-consuming lifestyle—a type of "seize the day" event. "We Skate" features more of the sophisticated guitar work that appears earlier on the LP. You continue through "What a Drag" and "Space Invaders" to get to "Loser" with these pearls of wisdom: "What are you gonna do when reality crashes down on you? / You're gonna have to get off your ass / You're gonna have to live because no one is going to help you forever / You're gonna have to stand strong before life sweeps you away." Yes! That is a powerful commentary by FACE THE RAIL. This record is strong all the way through with some of the most impressive guitar work ever witnessed on a skate/thrash LP. A.N.S. fans will appreciate this work! The limited hard-stock sleeve is silk-screened with an elaborate multi-coloured graphic that is mind-boggling! Tankcrimes has done it again!

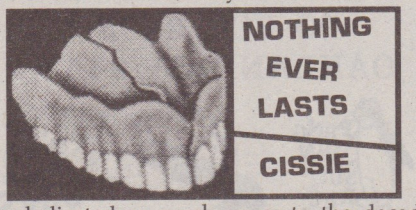
Fuck yes! The almighty COCKSPARRER graced our fair city for two nights of the best skinhead rock available anywhere on our planet! Pirates Press celebrated their fifth anniversary in grand style with a full weekend of festivities for COCKSPARRER, their families, and two thousand sundry skins and punks! Mr. Eric Mueller, president and spiritual leader of Pirates Press, provided entertainment, food, lodging, and a family-type atmosphere for COCKSPARRER. The skins and punks behaved surprisingly well in the presence of the much-revered COCKSPARRER! Nobody was going to mess up this rare opportunity to see the most influential skinhead rock band of all time! Opening for COCKSPARRER on the Friday night bill were two of the most popular skinhead bands to emerge in the Bay Area over the last fifteen years. The HARRINGTON SAINTS have developed into an Oi! powerhouse that is extremely well respected in these United States of America. The HARRINGTON SAINTS have been playing non-stop and every time they play, there is an entire squadron of skinheads converted to rabid fans!! The rock-solid working-class anthems are administered with passion by Mr. Darrel Wojick on vocals and has won over the skins and punks far and wide!! The HARRINGTON SAINTS' set included many of the tunes from their brilliant new Longshot Music/Contra Records LP. Entitled *Dead Broke in the USA*, this very same strong-as-fuck title track was the first number in their set. The HARRINGTON SAINTS then slammed right into "Guilty," "Put Your Boots Back On," and then "Claret and Blue." Song number six was one of the real crowd-pleasers! "Bootstraps" gets all the skins rushing up front to sing along! Yes sir! "Bootstraps" renews your resolve to carry on: "Life has just knocked me down again / But the bootstraps gonna pull me up again... Broken down homes, broken down dreams / I brought what you taught me out into the street / Always stood tall, showed 'em what I got / Now I'm the man that you wanted me to be." Yes! That is a top-notch Oi! song! The HARRINGTON SAINTS then plowed through "Sounds of the Street," followed by a BLITZ cover, "Razors in the Night." Excellent!! After a high-quality version of "Working Class Friday Night" (also from *Dead Broke in the USA*), the HARRINGTON SAINTS finished up with the song that closes the aforementioned LP. "A Nation Divided" is strong musically as well as lyrically!! Read some of these words: "Surrounded by a culture of fear / Makes you wanna get the fuck outta here / Manufacturer of an economic prison / A planned destruction of an entire system / Let's scream! Let's shout! / Let's tear down the fucking walls that keep a nation divided." Fuck yes! That's a great song!! Thanks go out to Darrel, Mike, Deuce, Jayson, and Forrest for a fantastic set! Contact the HARRINGTON SAINTS at www.myspace.com/harringtonsaints and for a copy of the new album or any of their earlier 7" releases, contact either Longshot Music at www.longshotmusic.com or Contra Records at www.contra-net.com or Pirates Press Records at www.piratespressrecords.com. And look for a new split 7" EP with the HARRINGTON SAINTS and the great German band VOLXSTURM soon!

The next support band for COCKSPARRER was the legendary Bay Area skinhead/punk conglomeration the REDUCERS SF. The REDUCERS SF represented the West Bay and the East Bay during the halcyon days of yore when skinhead music was blasting out of venues like the Cocodrie Club on Kearny Street in North Beach and the Edinburgh Castle on Geary Street as well as the Purple Onion on Columbus Avenue in San Francisco. The REDUCERS SF formed in 1995 with some of the members having migrated to San Francisco from Santa Cruz, California. After an EP with Pair-o-Docs Records out of Austin, Texas, the REDUCERS SF aligned themselves with Mark Rainey and his TKO Records label. The REDUCERS SF had a number of 7" hits including their much-oved skinhead anthem "I Don't Like You." The SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS song "Situations" has remained a strong REDUCERS SF staple. The skins and punks still rise to the occasion when the REDUCERS SF play "No Control" off the *Crappy Clubs and Smelly Pubs* album and the material from the *Backing the Longshot* LP has stood the test of time. The REDUCERS SF will always have a place in the hearts of Bay Area skins and punks!! Next up was the band that everyone in San Francisco had been waiting for!! After nearly ten years, the unchallenged masters of skinhead music, COCKSPARRER, were back on stage at the Great American Music Hall on O'Farrell Street!! The men of COCKSPARRER were in good spirits! Read this set list: "Riot Squad," "Watch Your Back," "Working," "Gotta Get Out," "What's It Like To Be Old?," "Teenage Heart/Droogs Don't Run," "Bird Trouble," "Spirit of '76," "Tough Guys," "Get a Rope," "Argy Bargy," "Secret Army," "So Many Things," "Runnin' Riot," "I've Got Your Number," "Suicide Girls," "Because You're Young," "Take 'Em All," "Where Are They Now?" and an encore of "Sunday Stripper," "England Belongs to Me," and "We're Coming Back." What a fantastic show! On songs like "Working," "What's It Like To Be

Old," "Teenage Heart/Droogs Don't Run," "Tough Guys" and "Argy Bargy," the crowd sang every lyric in perfect harmony with COCKSPARRER. When "Runnin' Riot" starts, the crowd boils over and rushes the stage! "Because You're Young" immediately becomes a group sing-along, and the songs "Take 'Em All" and "Where Are They Now?" are introduced acapella by Colin with the crowd chiming in! The momentum grows and grows and the volume swells to a spine-tingling crescendo!! Then COCKSPARRER comes crashing in with the guitars, bass, and drums! Spectacular! The hairs on your neck will stand up! The second night for COCKSPARRER was equally inspirational!! "Sussed" was substituted for "Gotta Get Out," "Bird Trouble" was deleted while the classic "Chip on My Shoulder" was added!! A great time was had by all! Thanks go out to Pirates Press for all their hard work and a special thank you goes out to COCKSPARRER and their families! For COCKSPARRER product, go to www.piratespressrecords.com and look for their entire back catalog to be re-released on Pirates Press Records soon!

The Balazo Art Gallery, a.k.a. Submission Theater, hosted a San Francisco punk rock extravaganza last month. The headliners were Japanese punk cognoscenti D-CLONE and the support bands were full of vim and vigor! Local noise-merchants VACCUUM opened the show. This new San Francisco-area band consists of Robert (CONQUEST FOR DEATH) on vocals, Daiki on guitar, Cissie (PEDESTRIANS) on bass, and Vinnie on drums. Their set list consisted of: "Near Defeat," "Horrors All," "Dead," "Keep Fighting," "Driven," "Frustration," "Vaccuum," and "Fukkn Bllsht." Look for a demo from these characters in the near future! Next up was DOPECHARGE with Mackey, Bo, Grant, and their cronies. These guys always deliver a wild set exhibiting diverse influences. You hear noise derived from everything from DISCHARGE to DISORDER. You get D-beat with a capital "D"!! Keep your eye on DOPECHARGE. These cretins will have product out in the near future! Next on the bill was the ever-popular FUNERAL SHOCK. You have heard the brilliant FUNERAL SHOCK 45 RPM 7" "California's Dead" b/w "Petty Motherfuckers" released recently on Tankcrimes Records out of Oakland, California. FUNERAL SHOCK is back from their Pennsylvania excursion and is living in the Bay Area once again. Negative Tom and his bevy of bad humans dispatched the enthusiastic punk following with a monstrous, heavy-duty set of punk songs guaranteed to mangle your earlobes. Read the set list: "Messed Up," "California's Dead," "Not To Be," "Some Kind of Bullshit," "Fucked Up Kid," "Good Intentions," "Locked," "Blow Up West Point," "Right Now," "Invisible Man," "Petty Motherfuckers," and "Fight." Next up was NERVESKADE from Portland, Oregon. These PDX punks kicked a whole lot of punk rock butt! The NERVESKADE set was so motherfucking blistering hot—they threw down the fucking gauntlet!! D-CLONE was hard pressed to top the maniacal pace the NERVESKADE delivered. NERVESKADE blasted through an eleven song set that left all the punks sweaty and out of breath! Here are the NERVESKADE songs we heard that night: "Forced," "War," "Sick," Outside," "Plate," "Mind," "Parasites," "System," "Rampton," and "Germ." After four very strong performances from the likes of VACCUUM, DOPECHARGE, FUNERAL SHOCK, and NERVESKADE, D-CLONE hit the stage! These Japanese punk maestros knew that the bar had been set extremely high! D-CLONE rose to the occasion! D-CLONE kept the momentum that NERVESKADE had established! This was one of those rare shows where all five bands were quite good!

Until next month, see you fucks at the bar!



We dedicated so much space to the decade top tens that there's not much room left for the coordinator columns, so this'll be a short one. I've got two months left as *MRR* coordinator, so in my head I'm wrapping things up, but there's still a ton more work to be done: two issues to finish (including the much-hyped photo issue!), two more months of bills to pay, training my replacement, packing… I'm looking forward to having free time in a couple months, but I'm sure I'll get bored with it after a week. I mean it will be nice to not be constantly stressed, but producing a magazine every month has been a pretty rewarding way to spend my time… I know that part of me will miss it when it's gone.

Anyway, our search for a replacement coord went well. This time around we got a lot of interest and applications for the opening position, and as always it was a tough decision. We whittled it down to the choice of Mariam Bastani, another Chicago transplant. She's a hard worker, loves the punk rock thing, and is moving to San Francisco from Chicago in a month to begin working on the magazine. It'll be exciting to have a new perspective around the compound. Well, we're all excited about it anyway, so you should be too.

I was going to recount some of the best live shows that I saw over the last ten years, but there's not enough room, and the whole nostalgia thing makes me a little uneasy. I must have seen over a thousand bands this decade, and I had my mind blown dozens of times (wow, that's not a very high percentage), but I know that this next decade will yield some amazing stuff as well. Even though I'm horribly jaded, I am still excited by new music and I enjoy being stuffed into a basement or living room with a bunch of friends to watch a band. In fact, there's not much that I enjoy more, even when my mind is not blown…

Playlist: Killing Joke, Paintbox, Ramones, Needles, Radio Birdman, A Touch Of Hysteria, and everything on my decade top ten.

A lot of times when you have to make a difficult decision regarding the magazine, there's an unmistakable voice in the back of your mind intoning, "Tim wouldn't have done it that way," or something to that effect. Certain things about the way that the magazine is run are set in stone, most of them for good reason. This isn't *Punk Rock Confidential*, so even though we could use the revenue, you aren't gonna see advertisements for Ramones baby-wear or Social D sneakers anytime soon... We always get into long conversations about whether or not something is punk—or, if it is punk, is it *Maximum*? Are the Young Marble Giants punk in a way that means they can exist in the same review section as Terveet Kädet? Really? There *are* reviews of SPK and Diamanda Galas records in early issues of *MRR*...

One thing that always struck me as a little strange was the fact that there was only one Fugazi record in the record collection. That band shaped how I view punk and DIY culture, and I see them as very much a part of the same idea of punk that *MRR* represents. It's well known that a lot of the records missing from *MRR*'s record library were either rejected or purged because of Tim's own preferences and prejudices—it was his own personal collection, after all... In recent years, in order to fill these holes, we have in one way or another replaced a lot of classic punk records that he deemed unsuitable—in this issue we have a review of the Raincoats' debut LP, just reissued on KRS, which was not kept in the collection (though their first 7" was). And Dischord kindly send copies of all the Fugazi records we are missing earlier this month. If you are interested in seeing a list of some of the records we are missing and want to acquire, you can email mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. At some point we hope to have a database of the entire collection online, when our computer wizards are finished with this mammoth task. If you are interested in doing shitwork relating to that, feel free to email our web coordinator Paul here: paul@maximumrocknroll.com.

Whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com is where my old columns go to die on the internet. Write me: layla@maximumrocknroll.com

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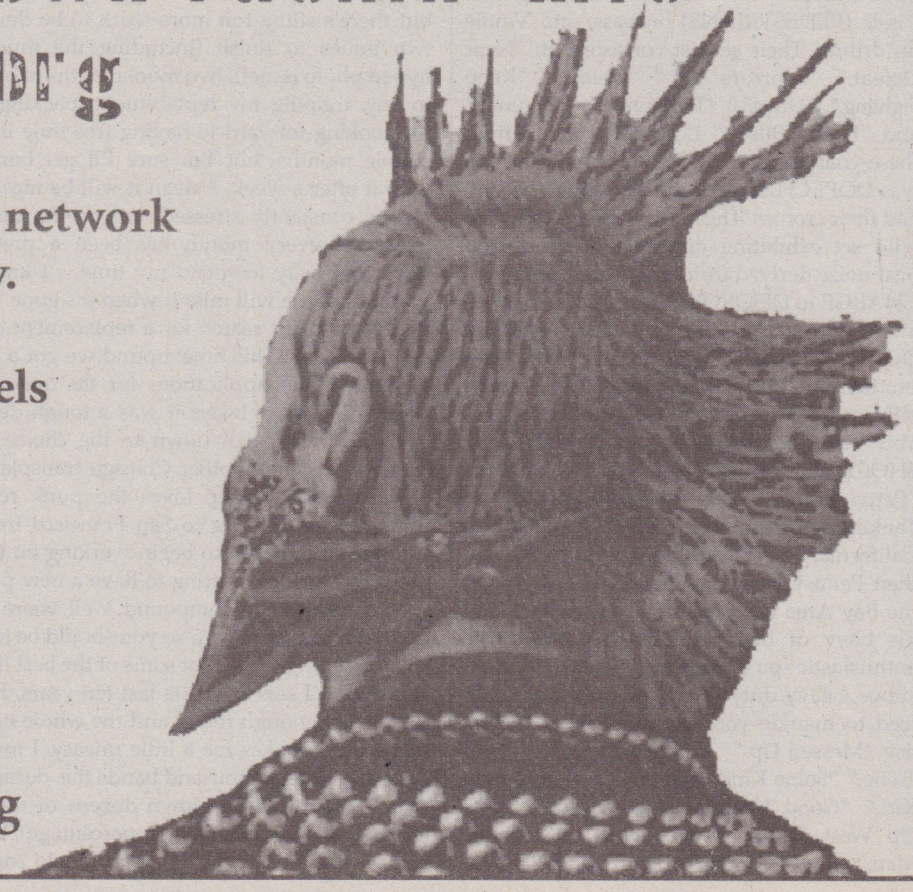

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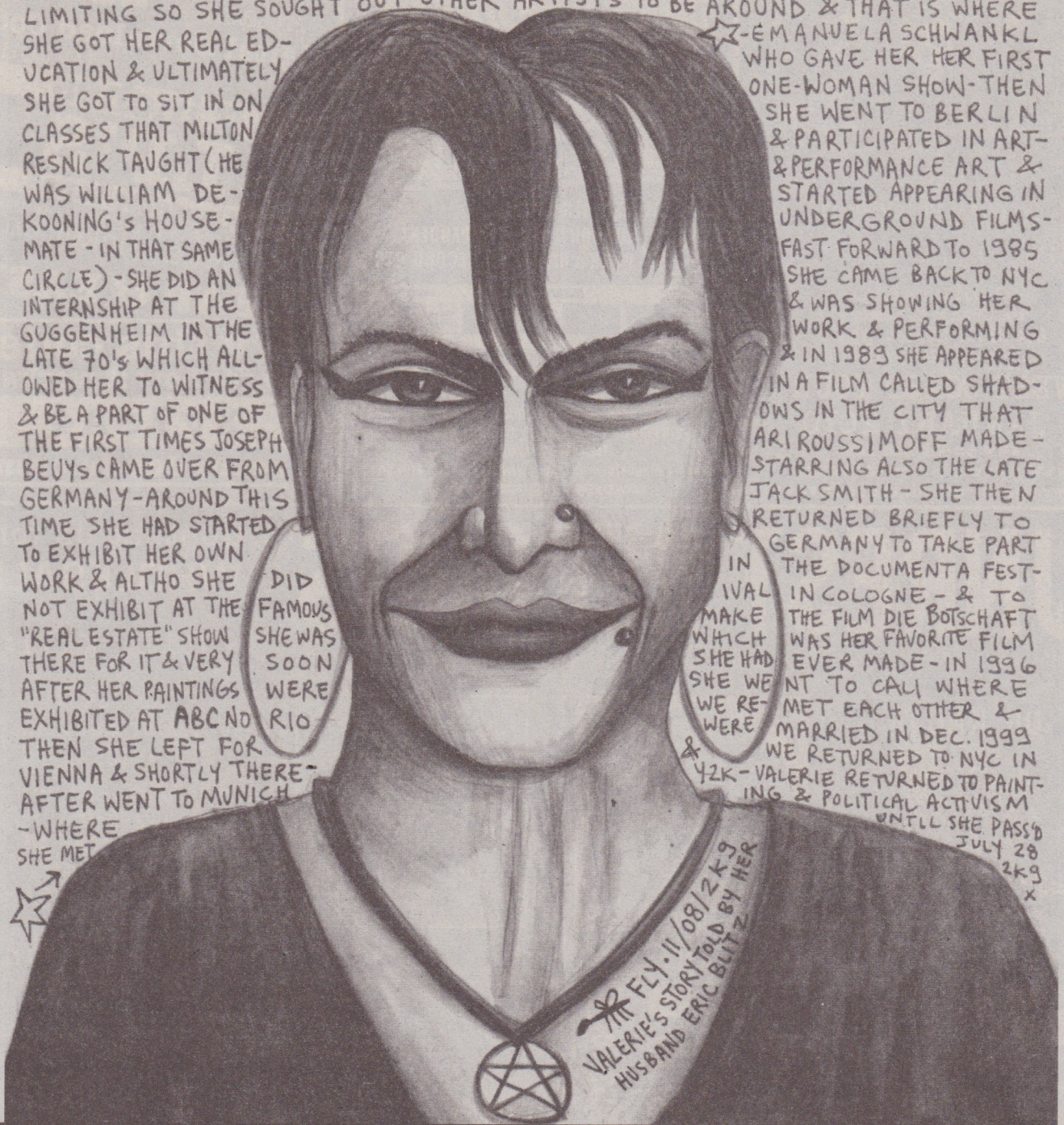

VALERIE CARIS WAS BORN MAY 18 1957 IN WALPOLE - JUST OUTSIDE OF BOSTON - SHE WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO WEAR EARTHSHOES THERE OR GET INTO FEMINISM & TO TRY TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION & IN HER TEENS SHE USED TO GO TO THIS HALF-WAY HOUSE & DANCE WITH "FORMERLY INCARCERATED" FOLKS - SHE WAS VERY TAKEN BY COUNTERCULTURE AT LARGE - ESP. VISUAL & PERFORMANCE ART - ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM WAS THE BIG THING SHE WAS DRAWN TO - SHE CAME TO NYC IN 1975 - SHE WANTED TO COME TO NYC BECAUSE SO MUCH WAS HAPPENING CREATIVELY & ALSO SHE WAS INSPIRED BY THE STUDENT TAKE-OVER AT COLUMBIA IN THE EARLY 70's - SHE INITIALLY WENT TO BARNARD TO STUDY ART BUT FOUND IT RESTRICTING & LIMITING SO SHE SOUGHT OUT OTHER ARTISTS TO BE AROUND & THAT IS WHERE SHE GOT HER REAL EDUCATION & ULTIMATELY SHE GOT TO SIT IN ON CLASSES THAT MILTON RESNICK TAUGHT (HE WAS WILLIAM DEKOONING's HOUSEMATE - IN THAT SAME CIRCLE) - SHE DID AN INTERNSHIP AT THE GUGGENHEIM IN THE LATE 70's WHICH ALLOWED HER TO WITNESS & BE A PART OF ONE OF THE FIRST TIMES JOSEPH BEUYS CAME OVER FROM GERMANY - AROUND THIS TIME SHE HAD STARTED TO EXHIBIT HER OWN WORK & ALTHO SHE DID NOT EXHIBIT AT THE FAMOUS "REAL ESTATE" SHOW SHE WAS THERE FOR IT & VERY SOON AFTER HER PAINTINGS WERE EXHIBITED AT ABC NO RIO THEN SHE LEFT FOR VIENNA & SHORTLY THEREAFTER WENT TO MUNICH - WHERE SHE MET ☆ - EMANUELA SCHWANKL WHO GAVE HER HER FIRST ONE-WOMAN SHOW - THEN SHE WENT TO BERLIN & PARTICIPATED IN ART-& PERFORMANCE ART & STARTED APPEARING IN UNDERGROUND FILMS - FAST FORWARD TO 1985 SHE CAME BACK TO NYC & WAS SHOWING HER WORK & PERFORMING & IN 1989 SHE APPEARED IN A FILM CALLED SHADOWS IN THE CITY THAT ARI ROUSSIMOFF MADE - STARRING ALSO THE LATE JACK SMITH - SHE THEN RETURNED BRIEFLY TO GERMANY TO TAKE PART IN THE DOCUMENTA FESTIVAL IN COLOGNE - & TO MAKE THE FILM DIE BOTSCHAFT WHICH WAS HER FAVORITE FILM SHE HAD EVER MADE - IN 1996 SHE WENT TO CALI WHERE WE RE-MET EACH OTHER & WERE MARRIED IN DEC. 1999 & WE RETURNED TO NYC IN 42K - VALERIE RETURNED TO PAINTING & POLITICAL ACTIVISM UNTIL SHE PASS'D JULY 28 2K9 X

VALERIE CARIS BLITZ AKA VALERIE ETERNAL - 11/08/2K9 - LOWER EAST SIDE NYC

I MET VALERIE & ERIC BLITZ IN THE '90S IN THE LOWER EAST SIDE & THEY WERE INSTANT COMRADES - VALERIE HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH HIV IN 1989 & GIVEN 3 MONTHS TO LIVE BUT SHE WAS ALWAYS CONTRARY TO ANY AUTHORITY SO SHE DEFIED THE ODDS & CONTINUED TO PERFORM & PAINT & INSPIRE EVERYONE AROUND HER UNTIL THIS PAST SPRING OF 2K9 WHEN SHE SUDDENLY BECAME SICK WITH A LUNG INFECTION & WAS ON LIFE SUPPORT FOR ABOUT THREE MONTHS AT ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL - SHE HAD CONSTANT VISITORS & A HUGE SUPPORT SYSTEM - HER HUSBAND ERIC BLITZ WAS THERE AROUND THE CLOCK & I HAVE TO MENTION MELISSA JAMESON WHO WAS A HUGE SUPPORT & WORLD WAR 3 ARTIST SETH TOBOCMAN - WE REALLY THOUGHT SHE WAS GOING TO MAKE IT!! - VALERIE ETERNAL DIED IN ERIC'S ARMS ON JULY 28 2K9 - FOR MORE VALERIE INFO PLEASE EMAIL: VALERIEARCHIVES@GMAIL.COM - IN FUTURE THERE WILL BE A WEBSITE - STAY TUNED - VALERIE WILL BE THE COVER OF PEOPS ZINE #5 COMING SOON! - TO CONTACT FLY PLEASE EMAIL FLY@PEOPS.ORG - OR - FLY@BWAY.NET - PLSE PUT MRR IN THE SUBJECT - FOR FLY ZINES CHECK WWW.MICROCOSMPUBLISHING.COM - FOR SNAIL MAIL: FLY PO BOX 1318 COOPER STN NYC NY 10276 USA

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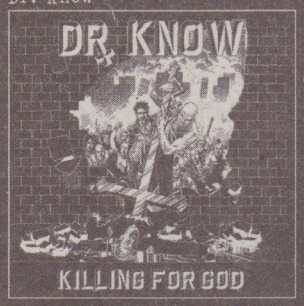

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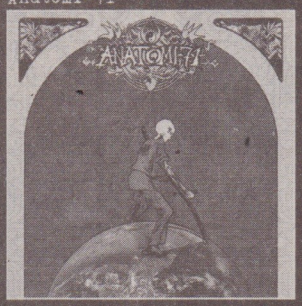

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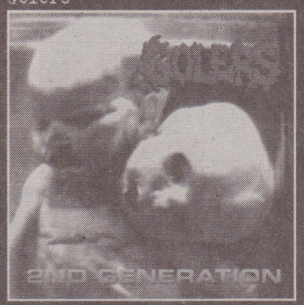
Golers



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NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILED BY CHRIS PUGMIRE AND LAYLA GIBBON

STUDENT NEWSPAPER RUNS WHITE SUPREMACIST AD

By Jill Tucker
From the San Francisco Chronicle
Lowell High School student newspaper published Friday included an advertisement for a white supremacist Web site, reportedly paid for by a group promoting a "campaign to inform, awaken and radicalize our White American youth." The site, www.victoryforever.com, features "white resistance music" as well as T-shirts, stickers and links to similar sites. The ad in *The Lowell* said "Free Music Downloads" and included the Web site address in a small box below an Arby's ad inside the paper. The school distributes the newspaper, the Lowell, once a month to its 2,600 students as well as subscribers through the mail. The contents of the online site caught school officials by surprise. They pulled all remaining copies of the paper and won't be mailing out subscription copies, said district spokeswoman Gentle Blythe. The ad cost $30.

It appears as if the ad's creators attempted to deceive school faculty and students. The Web link in the ad looked dramatically different Friday than it did prior to when the ad ran. Internet records show that on Nov. 4 the Web site included an innocuous page offering music by independent artists, including an African American man, and links for music that went nowhere. There was no hint of white supremacist views. That cached version was removed from Internet archives late Friday afternoon. The newspaper's two faculty advisers said they took the "deceptive and misleading" ad at face value and never checked the Web site, Blythe said. "If they had seen what it is, they would have worked with their student editors and made the determination that it was not appropriate content for the paper," she said. "We are appalled."

An anonymous e-mail containing several misspellings and grammatical errors reportedly from the Web site's authors sent to local media said the advertisements were placed in student newspapers across the country to appear Friday and would be running through next week "and in the future. "San Francisco was selected because it has long suffered the ravages of liberal insanity, vile degeneracy and criminal victimization of it's citizens by the very 'diverse' populations it seeks to embrace," according to an e-mail sent separately to *The Chronicle*. The e-mails appeared to originate at a computer at Idaho State University.

GUANTANAMO CONDITIONS DETERIORATE

By Andrew Wander
From Al Jazeera
On the night that Barack Obama won the 2008 presidential election, 21-year-old Mohammed el Gharani was sitting in a segregation cell in Guantanamo Bay's high security Echo Block. He remembers the excitement among his fellow prisoners at the prospect of an Obama presidency. "Everyone was very hopeful; people were saying he was going to change things, that he would close the prison," Gharani, who was released in June, says. "Even the guards were telling us that if he won, things would improve for us."

They were to be disappointed. A year after Obama's election win, Al Jazeera has learnt that despite the new president's pledge to close the prison and improve the conditions of detainees held by the US military, prisoners believe that their treatment has deteriorated on his watch. Authorities at the prison deny mistreating the inmates, but interviews with former detainees, letters from current prisoners and sworn testimony from independent medical experts who have visited the prison have painted a disturbing picture of psychological and physical abuse very much at odds with White House rhetoric on prisoner treatment.

While no-one is alleging a return to the early days of the prison, when detainees were subjected to "enhanced interrogation" techniques that are today widely regarded as torture, prisoners say day-to-day life at Guantanamo has become harder under the Obama administration. Within days of Obama's inauguration and subsequent announcement that he would close Guantanamo, prisoners say authorities introduced new regulations and revoked previous privileges at the prison. "They took away group recreation for prisoners in segregation, which was the only time we saw anyone," Gharani remembers. "They took away the books we had from the library. They even sprayed pepper spray into my cell while I was sleeping, so I'd wake up unable to breathe." Gharani says he was beaten so badly by guards that he is still suffering pain today.

Al Jazeera has obtained letters written by those currently being held in Guantanamo that tell a similar story. In one, written in March, a prisoner, who has asked that he remains anonymous for fear of repercussions, says he is writing to "depict to what degree our conditions inside Guantanamo detention have deteriorated" since Obama took office. "I am in the very same cell, wearing the same uniform, eating the same food, yet treated much worse compared to mid-2008," the prisoner writes. "We are unable to understand the goals of the policy of more restrictions and inflexibility." According to the letter, prison authorities inflict "humiliating punishments" on inmates and prisoners face "intentional mental and physical harm."

"The situation is worsening with the advent of the new management," the prisoner writes, noting, like Gharani, that the new rules were imposed in January this year. Conditions, he says, "do not fit the lowest standard of human living". Separately, two prisoners have complained to their lawyer that their belongings, including their bedding, were removed from their cells on several occasions for no reason. Each time, they were told that the removal was a "mistake," and the belongings were returned, only to be confiscated again. More disturbingly, the same two prisoners say that during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, their recreation time was moved to prevent them from taking part in traditional group prayer. Using religion to punish prisoners is illegal under international law. Authorities at Guantanamo deny the prisoners are kept from practicing their religion, although they concede that recreation times are sometimes moved "due to operational needs." They say

that personal belongings are not removed from cells "unless detainees misuse the items"; the prisoners categorically deny that they did so.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which monitors prisoner treatment at Guantanamo, declined to comment on specific allegations at the prison, but says that it recognizes the cumulative effect low-level abuse can have on the well being of prisoners in general. "In some cases, a single act may amount to torture," ICRC spokesman Simon Schorno says. "In others, ill treatment may be the result of a number of methods used over time, which, taken individually and out of context, may seem harmless."

For the Guantanamo prisoners, avenues of protest against their treatment are limited and many have resorted to hunger strikes. Now there is concern that the force-feeding regime to which hunger strikers are subjected is having a detrimental effect on their mental and physical health. Abdul Rahman Shalabi has been on hunger strike since August 2005. He has been force-fed twice a day by Guantanamo personnel, who insert a feeding tube through his nose in order to administer a liquid diet aimed at keeping him alive. But independent doctors who have evaluated him say that the insertion of the tube has done permanent damage to his nose and throat, making inserting new feeding tubes difficult and stopping him from receiving the calories he needs. His lawyers say that persisting with the current treatment could be doing more harm than good. Shalabi was hospitalized in March, and his weight has dropped to just 107 pounds, 30 per cent below his ideal body weight and at the threshold of major organ failure.

Shalabi's lawyer, Jana Ramsey, is bringing a case aimed at forcing the government to allow medical specialists to work with Guantanamo personnel to prevent the further weight loss she says is inevitable if his current treatment persists. "While participating in the strike, Abdul Rahman has, among other things, been overfed to the point of vomiting, had tubes inserted and removed repeatedly until his nose bled, choked until he passed out and been blasted by pepper spray more times than he can remember," she says. "He is now dangerously underweight. We are deeply concerned that the medical staff at Guantanamo have no plan to keep Abdul Rahman from starving to death." As part of the case, Ramsey arranged for independent medical experts to examine Shalabi at the prison over the summer. Dr Sondra Crosby, an ear, nose and throat specialist who examined him in August, said that without a change in treatment, the prisoner will die. "Mr Shalabi has been on a hunger strike for four years, and only recently has his condition severely deteriorated," her testimony notes.

His current treatment is also having a negative impact on his mental health, experts have found. Dr Emily Keram, a psychiatrist who evaluated him in July, told the court he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and severe depression. "Mr. Shalabi exhibits symptoms and disorders consistent with his reports of coercive interrogations and other mistreatment," she said, adding that some of this trauma occurred this year. "The medical records do indicate that Mr. Shalabi was subjected to Forced Cell Extraction in connection with his feeding multiple times per day through the months of January and February. Mr Shalabi's psychological symptoms are consistent with the distress he reported experiencing as a result of these extractions." Shalabi himself attributes his weight loss to his treatment at the prison. "My weight has dropped from sadness and provocations, daily humiliations and harassments and the sickness," he says in a letter written in September. "I am a human who is being treated like an animal." Authorities at Guantanamo deny that hunger strikers are subject to different treatment to other prisoners and say that no-one is being mistreated.

"All allegations of abuse are fully investigated and if warranted, further action taken," says Lieutenant Commander Brook DeWalt, a military spokesman for the prison. "As with any facility of this nature, we receive many allegations and we investigate any claim, no matter what the source, and take appropriate action when warranted." But lawyers say that efforts to raise these issues with the relevant authorities have been met with inertia. Ahmed Ghappour, who represents Guantanamo prisoners, has lodged several requests to initiate investigations since Obama took office. "I have requested four investigations regarding prisoner abuse just this past year," he says. "The military responded to my first request indicating that they would investigate, but have been radio silent since then." Released after a federal court found him to be entirely innocent, Mohammed el Gharani is now adjusting to life outside prison. He says that the allegations made by current inmates match his experience of Guantanamo during the months leading up to his release. "I recognise all of this," he says. "There are still more than 200 people in Guantanamo. Since Obama became president, less than 20 have been released. I don't know why, but he has broken his promises."

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STRIKE BY OVER 1000 HAFT TAPEH CANE CUTTERS ENDS IN VICTORY

From the *Iranian Workers Solidarity Network*
www.iwsn.org
More than 1000 cane cutters at the Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Company have ended their three day strike after the management agreed to meet the workers' demands. The cane cutters went on strike at 11am on November 9 and continued their strike the next by gathering at the cane cutting camp of the company. The workers demanded the immediate payment of the annual productivity bonus. Most of the cane cutters are seasonal workers from the nearby Lorestan province, working for the company for five or six months a year. The workers ended the strike on November 12 once their bonuses were paid. The success of this strike is even more remarkable when we consider the fact that many of the leaders of the Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Company Workers' Trade Union are in prison.

RIP ANDREW KEITH CAMPOS

On Friday October 23rd 2009 Andrew Keith Campos was murdered. Keith was a bad ass punk rocker. The best kind of bad ass. He had a huge heart and at the same time, he didn't put up with shit from anybody. His untimely death has sent a ripple through the scene from Woodland to Davis, Sacto, the Bay, LA, and north. Keith was in Society's Disease, Eviscerated Entrails, and most recently Planetary Ruins. He was also one of the first crue members in the Sacto Area Pyrate Punx. The dude was a dedicated, fun loving, generous, and loyal motherfucker. We all love and will miss you my friend. We are all totally fucked up over this senseless shit and are trying hard to do something positive in the aftermath. If you'd like to donate in Keith's name to his favorite charity, you can do so here: www.badrap.org/rescue/wish.cfm If you go to the link, the PayPal button is on that page. You can donate in Keith's name... Andrew Keith Campos.

LACK OF HEALTH CARE WORSENS WOMEN'S LIFE QUALITY

By Laura MacInnis
From Reuters
GENEVA – Despite living six to eight years longer than men, women lack essential health care throughout their lives, particularly as teenagers and elderly people, the World Health Organization said on Monday. In a report, the WHO said that women around the world are "denied a chance to develop their full human potential" because many critical medical needs are ignored. "Women generally live longer than men, but their lives are not necessarily healthy or happy," Margaret Chan, the head of the United Nations health agency, said at the WHO on Monday. Though women tend to seek out medical services more often than men—particularly before, during and after pregnancy—they often fail to get adequate treatment to cope with violence, depression and problems related to old age, such as dementia.

"The obstacles that stand in the way of better health for women are not primarily technical or medical in nature. They are social and political," Chan said. Childbirth assistance can be particularly hard to access for unmarried and marginalized women, teenagers and sex workers, WHO said in its first attempt to log differences between men's and women's health over their lifetimes. "In many countries, sexual and reproductive health services tend to focus exclusively on married women and ignore the needs of unmarried women and adolescents," the report said. "Paradoxically, health systems are often unresponsive to the needs of women despite the fact that women themselves are major contributors to health, through their roles as primary care givers in the family and also health care providers," it said.

WHO also said some 99 percent of the estimated 500,000 women who die every year giving birth are in developing countries where medical supplies and skilled workers are in short supply. But while emphasizing the many links between poverty and ill health, the report also stressed that many shortcomings affect women across income brackets and geographical regions. Depression and anxiety affect far more women than men, and women are more likely to catch sexually transmitted diseases. Women are also overwhelmingly more likely to be victims of sexual violence than men, and elderly women's health problems such as eyesight and hearing loss, arthritis, depression and dementia are often untreated. Unequal access to education, employment and fair wages can also present obstacles to women's health, especially in markets where medical insurance is linked to work or where user fees are required to access basic services, the WHO report found.

SQUATTING BAN PLANNED IN NETHERLANDS

From Indymedia.org
For the last three years a ban on squatting has been in preparation in Dutch politics. A new act to ban squatting in the Netherlands passed through parliament on October 15th. Squatting empty houses that have been empty for over a year is currently still legal in the Netherlands. The new act, an initiative by the Christian Democrats, the Christian Union and the conservative opposition party VVD, is to make squatting a felony punishable by at least one year and up to three years of prison when refusing to evict. Despite strong critique from the High Court, the union of city councils and even the Amsterdam police force, the Christian/right wing majority in The Hague is pushing this law through.

Having suffered from an immense housing shortage ever since the sixties, squatting has a long history in the Netherlands and has always been a legal means for thousands of people to acquire a roof over their heads. Not only will all these people be criminalized, no initiative to bring about other solutions for losing their homes has been brought up. This and the complete disregard for the culture that has been created by squatters and their vital role in activist infrastructure has been overlooked.

Currently the senate still has to vote on the new act, but given the same majority of parties that voted in favor in parliament also exists in the senate, odds are by January 1st 2010 all squats in the Netherlands will be up for eviction. Happy New Year. A three year campaign against the criminalization of squats, strongly focusing on improving the public image of the squatting movement has culminated on October 15th in the occupation of parliament square where a tent camp was set up on the day of voting. The moment the bill was voted upon the parliament had to disband as the meeting was disrupted by protest from the spectators bench, which was soon silenced by security and police. Hundreds of squatters on the square made an attempt to enter the parliament building to voice their dissent, but were driven away by riot cops. Later in the evening riot cops violently evicted the entire square, making over a hundred arrests.

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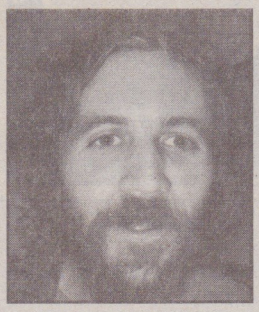
MRR asks YOU:

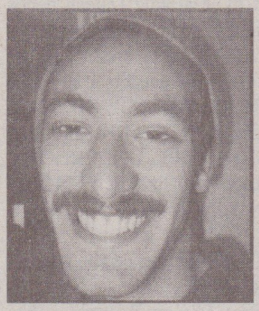
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: What's a secret you swore you'd keep? (asked at the drunkest house show of the year)



Nate, 26, Oakland
I have no secrets. All these other people are imposters.

Abraham, 22, Oakland
In third grade, I was at the top of the jungle gym, and this retarded girl tried to climb up. To assert my position, I told her not to, and she freaked out and fell off the jungle gym and broke her arm.



Alex, 23, San Francisco
I am Jesus reincarnated, uncircumcised of course.

Laura, 20, Hayward
My old friend told me she wanted to fuck the shit out of her roommate and, you know, I didn't spill the beans for a while, but then we were all drunk and I couldn't help myself!

Brittany, 20, Hayward
When I was thirteen, me and some friends were on a field trip for school, and at the gift shop, I dropped a keychain into the bag of this girl I didn't like. She got busted because they thought she stole it, and I actually felt really bad, but didn't say anything because I didn't want to get in trouble.

James, 21, Oakland
These punk rock kids that I went to high school with, we had this pact that we wouldn't trust any white Anglo Saxon Americans over thirty five, but now most of them are approaching that age.

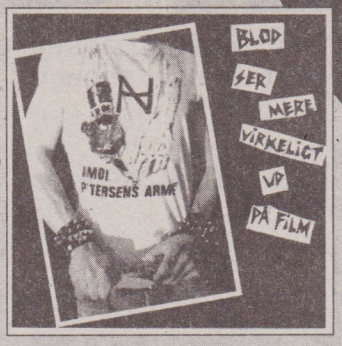
Oscar, 22, Oakland
One of our roommates has an STD.

Andrew, 19, Oakland
One of my friends has a foot fetish.

Dion, 25, Oakland
My best friend discovered his sexual orientation by having a three way with what he thought was going to be two girls, but was a girl and a guy.

Matt, 27, Oakland
One time I shit my pants and it sucked. When? No comment. But that's not my real secret. That's gonna stay undisclosed.

MRR's STAFF PICKS THE TOP TEN RECORDS OF THE '00s



TIM BROOKS

I imagine a lot of people aren't going to attempt the mammoth task of a decade top ten. I mean, do you list stuff that you listen to now? Or stuff that was important "then"? Fuck it, I threw some stuff out there. I'm sure I forgot shit…. There was a lot of great stuff that came out and is still coming out. Pretty inspiring to know that folk are still pushing boundaries and not just rehashing the same old shit. In no order…

LPs:

MARKED MEN – "On The Outside" LP (Dirtnap – 2004)
I could have put any or all of their records here … In fact four of the spaces could have been made up with their four LPs. Probably my favorite punk band of all time. They have the hooks…the songwriting. Shit makes the hair stand up on the back of my neck. The combo of Mark Ryan and Jeff Burke is unstoppable. I have no idea why they were not huge. Not only fantastic on record they were mind blowing live. When I saw them in on their home turf in Texas it felt like I was high on drugs, but I wasn't, MARKED MEN will be a band that is a standard bearer for years to come. This will sound as fresh in 40 years as it does today.

SKIN LIKE IRON – "All Human Failings" LP (Free Cake – 2009)
A recent record that lays waste to most hardcore that has come before. Super intense caustic hardcore sounding like the missing link between INTEGRITY and FROM ASHES RISE. The LP plays like one big song, with lulls of feedback between the actual tracks. I saw these guys a bunch over the past couple of years, and every time they fucking dismantle the place. This basically moved onto my record player for a few months earlier this year.

COMPLETE CONTROL – "Reaction" LP (TKO – 2004)
Unfairly lumped in with the spiky Punkcore bands, these Austin maniacs put out easily the best street punk (if that's still a term) record of the decade. It's like SLF mixed with DANZIG or some shit. Sambo's songwriting is top notch, and his stage presence was always amazing depending on the amount of booze consumed. So good.

REIGNING SOUND – "Time Bomb High school" LP (In the Red – 2002)
Hardly punk, but an absolute favorite round our yard. I'm sure everyone knows about Greg Cartwright's post-OBLIVIANS band. Sublime garage rock sounding like mid-period STONES, VELVET UNDERGROUND, MODERN LOVERS, and a dash of late-'60s blue-eyed soul. What Cartwright has is actual *songs*, not just a sound. His solid songwriting really shines on this. Sounds as good now as when it came out in 2002. Timeless.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Primary Colours" LP (Goner – 2008)
I would definitely classify myself as a fan of Goner Records, but I don't think they have broken a ton of new ground with their releases; mostly relying on lo-fi garage schlock, which works just fine for me, but wouldn't win awards for originality. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING is a whole different beast. Sure, the guitars are distorted and the vocalist has a punk rock sneer… but it goes *waaay* deeper than that. The blueprint of the band is what makes Australian bands so great, from the punk swagger of the SAINTS to the cheeky rock of AC/DC and ROSE TATTOO, or even some of the classic murder punk bands like NEWS or RAZAR. But layered on top is everything from the hypnosis of VELVET UNDERGROUND, to the bleakness of Mark E Smith and the FALL. On each listen this LP unravels more and more and every time I try and throw on another disc I keep hitting repeat. It's so refreshing to see stuff coming out recently that equally matches any record from the past 30 years.

FROM ASHES RISE – "Silence" LP (Witch Hunt – 2001)
Me and Dougie were at Mission Records (a record store with a tiny show space in the back that had *all* of the best early-'00s bands play) and FROM ASHES RISE was about to play. We'd never heard them were and we're about to leave when they played and made our fuckin' ears bleed. We were totally blown away by their power. It still stands as one of the best shows I've ever seen. Their records never quite achieved the steamroller live effect, but they still delivered some heavy shit that had a lot of rotation at our place.

HEX DISPENSERS – "Winchester Mystery House" LP (Douchemaster – 2009)
Another new one, and along with the new MARKED MEN LP my fave LP of '09. I liked everything this band have done, but this is just perfection. Like the RAMONES meets the WIPERS… Super catchy yet still dark and moody… *Loooove* it!!

NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – LP (Kick N' Punch – 2003)
There was all kinds of hype around Danish bands a few years back. Rightly so as the records by NHFTK, YOUNG WASTENERS, and HUL are some of the best records of the decade. I love this record, and loved NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS live. It reminds me of some the early-'80s UK bands that didn't totally fit in: DARK, WALL, UNDERDOGS, etc. Or maybe the Chicago stuff like the EFFIGIES and NAKED RAYGUN. Killer.

BORN DEAD ICONS – "Salvation on the Knees" LP (Partners in Crime – 2001)
Another band I saw destroy Mission Records… Like a crusty MOTÖRHEAD. This LP has the hooks man… I like the weird French accents too.

LIFES HALT! / WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? – "Start Something" split LP (Youngblood / 625 – 2001)
I must admit I don't dig this out too often, but it has to go on here just because of the change these bands made in hardcore. I have grown up being too late or too early for pivotal "I was there" moments. The gigs I saw back in the day that people think must have been amazing were mostly shite. Drunk crustys playing through the shittest PA of all time. When we saw WHN? & LIFES HALT! with TEAR IT UP at the end of their mammoth tour at Mission Records, I felt I was witness to something really special. The face of hardcore changed for a lot of people that tour.

FRUSTRATION – "Full Of Sorrow" LP (Born Bad – 2006)
Not sure why these guys are flying so far under the radar

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
It's been said before, I'll say it again. This is the best LP BLITZ never did.

Other good shit:
SPITS, LIMP WRIST, ACURSED, GAUZE, SKITSYSTEM, FRAMTID, EXPLODING HEARTS, DESTINO FINAL, SACRED SHOCK, MARTYRDOD, SKITKIDS, STATUES, OBSERVERS, INVASIÓN, YOUNG WASTENERS, HUL, SHITTY LIMITS, KNOCKOUT PILLS, JAY REATARD, TOTALITÄR, DISCLOSE, DILLINGER 4, etc…

EPs:

FUCKED UP – "Police" EP (Deranged – 2003)
I love this band, even thought they have been cast out of the "scene." Some of FUCKED UP's longer shit is a bit tired, but you can't deny this jam. Like a hardcore BLITZ, this EP is almost the perfect punk song. It also has one of my favorite lines of all time: "Out of hand the police / Shitty band the Police." Genius

TRAGEDY – "Can We Call This Life?" EP (Tragedy – 2002)
Although bands in Sweden had been doing the epic crust thing for a while, TRAGEDY just fucking nailed it. Saw them at Mission Records and they destroyed! This EP is the most melodic stuff they did and manages to harness KILLING JOKE meets NEW MODEL ARMY with MOTÖRHEAD. *Sooooo* good.

AIRFIX KITS – "Flex Time" EP (Deranged – 2009)
Bit of a cheat this one, as it's not out yet, but the copy I have has been on the turntable since I got it. Music is not a science, it's a feeling…so a lot of my picks have things attached to them other than music alone. The band is mates, my band plays with them whenever we can. I can't see them enough. I listened to the demo to death, and can tell what they added in re-recording these songs. AIRFIX KIRS is the snarky kid in the back of the class who bunks school and smokes ciggies. The music is sharp and angular, but it's Allan's Scots brogue and clever lyrics that really make this for me. Nice work by Gord Deranged and Ken Dirtnap for jumping on this band before everyone else.

SMALLTOWN – "Fall Into Line" EP (Bridge – 2002)
This band's LPs have been a little too slick for me, but their first two EPs are untouchable. It sounds like early STIFF LITTE FINGERS and the NEUROTICS. Fantastic songwriting and catchy hooks… What more do you need???

WAR ALL THE TIME / WHOLE IN THE HEAD – split EP (Crimescene – 2007)
I'm from the UK and some of my fondest memories are seeing bands like SUFFER and HEALTH HAZARD in the '90s. WAR ALL THE TIME and WHOLE IN THE HEAD are the closest thing to that this decade. WHOLE IN THE HEAD is like a fucking steamroller SS DECONTROL, NO COMMENT, and INFEST blast fest. WAR ALL THE TIME is Sned's current band and is as good as anything he's done before. It's super harsh hardcore with a distinct Japanese flavor. This is one of my fave releases of all time.

GENTLEMAN JESSE – "I Don't Wanna Know (Where You Been Tonight)" EP (Douchemaster – 2007)
It was between this and EXPLODING HEARTS (RIP), but this got it cos they fucking nailed it. This sounds like it came out in the late '70s. Unlike the TRANZMITORS who sound very "now" this sounds very "then." Power pop perfection.

NO PARADE – "Nightsticks and Justice" EP (Partners In Crime – 2001)
Members of FROM ASHES RISE… ferocious.

TRANZMITORS – "Some Girls / Dancing In The Front Row" (La-Ti-Da – 2006)
Maybe not as authentic as the EXPLODING HEARTS or GENTLEMAN JESSE, but just as many hooks. Fantastic power pop from Canada.

KRIEGSHÖG – "Hardcore Hell" EP (Hardcore Survives / Heartfirst – 2008)
I always thought the super blown-out madness of FRAMTID and DISCLOSE was a bit much for me, but for some reason this year I have been all over this shit. This EP is so noise drenched… It's perfect.

AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ – "De Hjernedodes Nat" EP (Kick N' Punch – 2000)
AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ brought back the crazy early BLACK FLAG era SoCal punk. They are from Denmark. They had shit down pat. This still holds up.

SCHOLASTIC DEATH – "Shackle Me Not" EP (625 / Risk – 2001)
Good people, good band. Sounded like fuckin' HERESY with my mate Max singing. They brought the fun every time and the kids went bonkers.

Don't even get me started on how many didn't make the cut! So much good shit…

PACO MUS

I never imagined how difficult this was going to be. I think I have a good memory, but somehow I can't really remember what I was listening to in 2004. The fact that I've lived in three different countries in the last ten years, that my records are in between two places, and that the ones I have at home are not that easy to access make matters worse. At the end I kept making lists at work and every time the same records kept coming to mind, so I didn't search much further for obscure stuff. Basically if these records came to mind on several occasions it must be because I love them. I feel weird that most of them have black and white covers so maybe there is something really wrong with me.

It is especially hard for a person running a record label to do this type of exercise. As it happens, I could have put more of my own releases on this list because I look back and still love them. I play the DESTINO FINAL and both INVASIÓN records all the time, but would feel weird listing them, so please keep that in mind since those three records would be on this list for sure.

The last thing I noticed when making the list is that it is hard to make an LP that stands the pass of time. 7"s are easy to write; making four songs and putting them together in some semi-cohesive way isn't that hard, but a collection of more songs is rarely done well. Maybe that's one of the reasons why more and more people make 12"s at 45 RPM or release a shit album after a few great 7"s. Perhaps people aren't taking enough time to release good records and are in need of immediate recognition, hence the jump to the big format straight away. Who knows, what is certain is that I could easily have a 25+ list of 7"s I consider flawless from the last decade, but I struggled to get ten good LPs. Enough boring shit—here is the list.

LPS:

1. FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)
Choosing the rest of records in this list was more complicated, but choosing this one was dead easy. Simply a perfect hardcore record. Full of hi-energy tunes that flow with perfection. Part early Swedish hardcore, part über-noisy Japanese hardcore—FRAMTID managed to make the style theirs. I think what sets *Under the Ashes* apart is the conviction with which it is played. It is really physical—you can feel how the four black-clad looking punks believe what they are singing like their lives depend on it.

2. ATROCIOUS MADNESS – "Total Control" LP (Wicked Witch – 2002)
I could have chosen pretty much any of their many records to be on this list—or even any of LEBENDEN TOTEN's (their newer band) 12"s, although it would be a bit premature since they are kinda recent—but I think this LP works best. Conspiracy-crazed hardcore punk that drinks from the same fountain as VORKRIEGSPHASE or CONFUSE. A barrage of noise made of layers and layers of feedback, endless drum rolls, radio frequencies, and agonizing screams. Another black and white record that looks and sounds apart.

3. TRAGEDY – "Vengeance" LP (Tragedy – 2002)
At risk of sounding cheesy I will say that TRAGEDY changed the face of HC in the last decade. *Vengeance* was their second LP and I was lucky enough to witness the songs on it live countless times. The production and songwriting is heads above any hardcore record I can think of in recent history. It is heavy; it sounds fucking impeccable and the songs are anthemic in a depressing way. Their graphics and lyrics are also top-notch for my taste making this a winner.

4. DISCLOSE – "Yesterday's Fairytale Tomorrow's Nightmare" 12" (Game of the Arseholes – 2004)
I could have picked the *Apocalypse of Death* 12", but ultimately I played this one more making it a winner. This is the last 12" that DISCLOSE released before Kawakami, the singer-guitarist and alma mater of the band, passed away. It shows how perfection can evolve from a simple concept. They took the history of DISCHARGE and made it their own. While DISCLOSE's early releases were more DISCHARGE singles-era hidden under layers of noise and distortion, this release, together with the other Dis-Bones-era DISCLOSE, evolved into something totally different. More solos, more syncopated D-beats, and the obvious BROKEN BONES touch on the guitar playing, making ultimately more memorable tunes. Extra points for the recreating of "Free Speech for the Dumb" on repeat on the B-side.

5. NAILBITER / DESTRUCCIÓN – "Faded Brain Age / Makineros Hijos de Puta" split LP (La Vida es un Mus – 2002) and NAILBITER – "Abused" 12" (Hardcore Holocaust – 2003)
I know I shouldn't list any record I had any involvement with, but it would be impossible not to pick both NAILBITER releases as my favorites for this decade. Their split with DESTRUCCIÓN (who I single-handedly blame for the current state of the Spanish raw punk scene) came straight after a killer demo. When I first heard the recording of what would become their split 7" with VIIMEINEN KOLONNA and the split with DESTRUCCIÓN, I

could not believe it. These three dirty squatters from Brazil and Italy recorded this shit under a bridge in Brixton. Holy shit, this was urgent and negative. Heavy on the ANTI CIMEX meets DEATH SIDE vibe, with amazing guitar work and a sense of speed that overwhelmed me. Shit, you can hear the kick pedal spring quite clearly! By the time the band entered the studio again for what became *Abused* they had evolved a little bit, moving into a more full-on Japanese hardcore mood. The result is what I consider a classic record. Housed in a cover that many people find offensive, the simple design hid a hardcore gem. I knew straight away that I should have robbed a bank to release it. Unfortunately, lack of funds sent the record to be released abroad.

6. CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
I find depression a huge sort of inspiration. Most of my favorite works have been created under a heavy dose of it. I also think that while trying to overcome it people become extremely creative. Somehow that's the feeling I get while listening to CRIMINAL DAMAGE's debut album. A collection of anthemic and melodic Oi!-punk songs in the tradition of England's finest, all backed with the lyrics of someone trying to escape hell. Rarely do you hear an American band (hell, I can't think of any other!) that does that style well, yet CRIM DAM totally manages to pull it off. It would be unfair to define the album as a mere copycat of the UK's golden era, since you can also hear NAKED RAYGUN, WIPERS, and French Oi! on it. I also recommend checking out their *No. Solution* LP, a perfect follow up to this debut.

7. BILLY BAO – "Fuck Separation" 10" (S-S – 2007)
Mattin and Co. took the piss out of the art-punk scene with their previous release (*Bilbo's Incinerator* 7") and they all ate it. Then the band recorded this masterpiece for S-S, and I can't think of a better label for it. Two ten-minute-long tracks of damaging mono-riffing guitars and repetitive drums trying to confuse you and make you angry at the concept of borders. Primitive by definition, but with a heavy dose of conceptualism.

8. TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank – 2007)
Very little can be added to this record. It's a total steamroller of hard-hitting hardcore punk; the same as they've been doing for over twenty years, so no surprises here. The only thing to mention is that so many people try to play this same style and fail miserably to leave an impression, while TOTALITÄR never fails to deliver the best of Swedish käng.

9. SEX VID – "Communal Living" 12" (Dom America – 2008)
The most recent LP on my entire list, and a choice I hope I won't regret in years to come. This LP perfectly sums up the evolution of a cult band. Sonically this is a sick and twisted recording—SEX VID recreates the best of VOID and DIE KREUZEN, while making it sound modern and of its time. Visually the artwork won me over—I get the same feeling looking at this record as I do looking at early NWW artwork. Simply put, this is a really carefully put together record that will win you over every time you play it.

10. JAY REATARD – "Blood Visions" LP (In the Red – 2006)
I know many people hate the guts of this individual and looking around he gives enough reasons to fuel that hate. He has gone onto bigger things and I don't really like any of his later output, but this LP is a punk rock masterpiece. It is fresh and it has songs—carefully crafted timeless little punk songs. Something most bands can't say in this day and age.

Other ten: TRAGATELO – LP, FRUSTRATION – "Full of Sorrow" 12", FUCKED UP – "Hidden World" 2xLP, BLACK LIPS – "Let it Bloom" LP, CRUDE – "Attitude" LP, CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP, BUSY SIGNALS – LP, BONE AWL – "Not For Our Feet" LP, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – LP, THE OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP

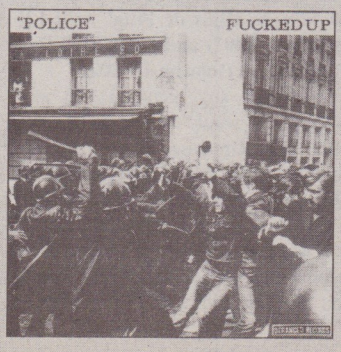
7"s:
1. OTAN – "El Indomable" EP (Mindless Mutant – 2006)
This is the most sincere punk record I've encountered during my lifetime. I get goose bumps every time I play it and I feel tense and uneasy every time I get a chance to see them live. Every time I play the damn record is like the first time. OTAN exists in a time warp of their own. They can write songs against the complimentary army service (it was outlawed over ten years ago) and still sound fresh and real. They still refuse to play gigs that serve alcohol, still have long speeches in between songs, still silkscreen their covers themselves, and do every little thing most people consider a lame residue of previous eras. The title song is about an anarchist comrade who has spent most of his life behind bars (and finally got parole this year) and it is one of the most beautiful allegories to friendship and struggle ever commit to vinyl. *El Indomable* is a lost gem of anarchist punk that would have fit perfectly on the Attack Punk label circa 1983. I can go on all day about this band, but the fact is that I play this pretty much ever other week and I never get tired of it, so without a doubt this is my favorite record of the last ten years.

2. SIDA / DESTRUCCIÓN – split EP (MRHC / Don't Belong / CVG / LVEUM – 2002)
As I mentioned above, I single-handedly blame these two bands for the whole new generation of Spanish raw punk. I think HORROR, CRIMEN DE ESTADO, ATENTADO, CROSTA, SEMEN, SUDOR, or any of the many young Spanish bands currently playing lawless and primitive hardcore punk are extremely influenced by these two bands. Hailing from Arnedo – La Rioja, a land internationally famous for its wine, came SIDA and then DESTRUCCIÓN. Both bands shared members and both bands shared their vision. The music is crude, really simple and raging, amateur hardcore, with really angry anarchist lyrics, very limited instrumental skill, and a single beat on the entire record. Crude artwork and an overall punk-as-fuck feeling. It may be hard to remember, but back in 2001 there were very few bands in Spain (even worldwide if I can be arrogant) that were *really* influenced by Swedish hardcore like ANTI CIMEX, BOMBANFALL, or CRUDE SS. Luckily we had the Becerra brothers and their many projects, but I don't think they really made the connection with the younger kids. However this split represents the beginning of the third wave of Spanish hardcore—the greatest we have lived yet in my humble opinion.

3. TRAGEDY – "Can We Call This Life?" EP (Tragedy – 2002)
So TRAGEDY released this 7" themselves in a pressing of several thousands and you never see it for sale. I guess that's a good sign of how popular a release is. Regardless of pressing sizes and units sold, what is clear to me is that *Can We Call This Life?* is the punkest and most anthemic of all TRAGEDY releases. It is hard for me not to pump my fist in the air while playing it, really.

4. WEBELOS – "Fuga de Cerebros" EP (Hillside Strangler – 2003) and "Fetichisme" EP (Evil Baby – 2002)
If SIDA and DESTRUCCIÓN represent the two bands to blame for the new wave of Spanish raw hardcore, then WEBELOS are exactly the same for the KBD influenced hordes of snotty punks coming out of Spain. Their debut came out in the '90s, but these two 7"s are the highlight of their discography. My pick is "Chica Bond" off *Fetichisme*. Basically these are two pieces of timeless amateur retarded punk rock. I play them all the time and I don't see that fact changing any time soon. Fortunately for us, WEBELOS added a keyboard and now operates under the name GRUPO SUB-1.

5. FUCKED UP – Any 7" up to "Dangerous Fumes" (2002-2006)
Another band that moved on onto something bigger. Personally, I don't think FUCKED UP has done anything interesting since *Hidden World*, a record that I love, but it is hard to think of a harder working band in the last decade. If I have to choose I'll go for *Generations* (the chorus still makes me raise my fist) or *Litany*, but really I could have chosen any of the first half-dozen singles, since they were all magic pieces of conceptual hardcore punk. Greatly packaged, designed, recorded, and written hardcore artifacts, really.



6. NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Das Reich / Secret Police" (Backwards Masking – 2003)
Doubtless NHFTK was flavor of the month for a second, and the fact that this 7" was so hard to get only helped their cult status. However, these two songs make a perfect old style two-track single. The guitar tone is so first generation Dansk punk it is hard to believe that it was recorded by people that I doubt were born when LOST KIDS or CITY X were around. Both songs are catchy and melodic outbursts of martial punk with a twist for World War Two aesthetics. Would be perfect filed next to CRISIS or PUBLIC EXECUTION.

7. FEROCIOUS X – "Befria Fran Vanda" EP (Overthrow – 2006)
The Japanese noise hardcore scene is (together with Spanish punk) the only scene I follow obsessively. It really is a safe bet, since I can't think of any record from that scene that has disappointed me in the last few years. The second FEROCIOUS X 7" is a eight-track EP of over-the-top noisy hardcore played at 1000 mph, sang in Swedish, and heavily influenced by the first generation of Swedish hardcore bands. CONFUSE, GLOOM, and FRIGORA also come to mind. There is *a lot* of treble guitar and feedback, some people will say too much, but the songs manage to flow and be memorable, partly because they are so bass driven. A thing to notice about this record is the absolutely insane drumming (Shin from FRAMTID played on this record), with endless rolls in every song.

8. LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Nuclear Flowers" EP (Wicked Witch – 2003)
The perfect follow up to ATROCIOUS MADNESS who shared three members with the "Living Dead." The original line up for this recording was made up of people who really couldn't play their instruments that well (except for the bass player), but that knew DISORDER or CONFUSE weren't much better at it. The result is an outburst of amateur noise punk that is catchy as hell. The five tracks are memorable, but the chorus to "Vampires" will stay with you forever. I must add that every single cassette and record LEBENDEN TOTEN has released in the last decade could be here in this very list. Also, they must get extra points for their fantastic good taste in designing their stuff. Something greatly missed these days.

9. LIMP WRIST – "Want Us Dead" EP (Lengua Armada / Cheap Art – 2005)
Many people thought LIMP WRIST would be done after the split with their original guitarist Mark Telfian. Most of those people had to shut up after this 7" came out. Old drummer Scott Moore started playing guitar and every song after he re-joined has been just as memorable as the previous ones; the highlights being *Want Us Dead* and their track on MRR compilation *Public Safety*. More punk than their previous efforts, these songs are four angry statements of non-fitting queer punkness.

10. KARKABA – "Alderrik Galdukoaiz" EP (Tutti Pazzi / Venganza Crust – 2004)
This recording came after two demos and some compilation tracks. Brutal and caustic hardcore from this bunch of Basque cavemen. Urgent, primitive, and angry hardcore played by people who live in the mountains far from fashion and hype, surrounded only by nature and developing plans trying to push them away. Playing raw music because that's the way they live. Their following LP is just as great.

Other ten: SPECTRES "Cold War" EP, HOMOSTUPIDS "The Glow" EP, EPISODE – EP, THE SHITTY LIMITS – EPs, NN – "Buitres" EP, VOCO PROTESTA – "Rezisti au Morti" EP, DEFECTOR – both EPs, FRAMTID / DISCLOSE – split EP, ZYANOSE – "Crossing" EP, INFIERNO DE COBARDES – both EPs.

MARK MURRMANN

LPs:
OOGA BOOGAS – "Romance & Adventure" LP (Aarght! – 2008)
This has spent so much time on my turntable over the past year or so, it was a shoo-in. My current go-to when I don't know what else to put on. *Romance & Adventure* may be too new to enjoy the same status as some of these other long-term go-to records, but I predict it'll hold up well over the years.

BAD TIMES – LP (Therapeutic – 2001)
Ahhh, the Memphis/Louisiana super-group record. The band that was never meant to be. You got Mr. Reatard, Mr. (E) Oblivian, and Monsieur Louie. They wrote some songs, practiced once, played one show in Illinois, recorded an album, and called it a day (until they played the Horizontal Action Blackout in Chicago). Live fast, die young. In and out. Ferociousness via rock 'n' roll. "Streets of Iron" stands as one of the best songs of the decade. So tough.

FM KNIVES – "Useless and Modern" LP (Broken / Moo-La-La – 2002)
Simple and catchy? Definitely applies to FM KNIVES, though they're a bit more of the kind of band whose songs sound simple to the layperson's ears, but really have so much going on in them. And the lyrics. Fuckin' genius stuff there.

PIRANHAS – "Erotic Grit Movies" LP (In the Red – 2002)
Could've just as easily listed the self-titled album on On/On Switch. These two are kind of like a continuation of a long, weird dream you don't want to wake from. One of the most interesting bands to come along in a while—not just weird for the sake of being weird. The music is solid, way ahead of its time.

LITTLE KILLERS – LP (Crypt – 2003)
Remember how it was kind of a big deal when this came out? It was the first record by a new band that Crypt had done in years. Reports came in of Tim Warren losing his shit after seeing them for the first time. This record took a little time to really grow on me. It's simple, but catchy, just like a great record should be, as far as I'm concerned. Every time it comes on I have fond memories of stomping around Belgrade…this album was my soundtrack for that trip. *Turn up the volume.*

CLONE DEFECTS – "Blood on Jupiter" (Tom Perkins – 2001)
Another exceptionally tough call. I mean, I knew the CLONE DEFECTS would be on this list, but which record? I could've just as easily gone with *Shapes of Venus* or any of their singles. A consistently great band.

FINAL SOLUTIONS – "Disco Eraser" LP (Misprint – 2003)
At the time everyone talked about how this was "Jay's new band." Well, sure, he was in the band, but really Zac, Justice, Tom, and later Quinn made this band. Lotsa bands have tried to go for the "KBD sound," whatever the fuck that is, but FINAL SOLUTIONS managed to sound punk, in the most basic, raw, no bullshit way. Whatever. Their first album just rips. "Deep Six," "Eat Shit Hologram," "Can't Sing Through My Fuzz Pedal." All killer, no filler. Got to see Zac's new band SECTOR ZERO at Budget Rock this year. Not quite a continuation of the FINAL SOLUTIONS formula or anything, but I suspect they might be making my 2020 list.

A FRAMES – LP (S-S – 2002)
My first time seeing the A FRAMES was in Ypsilanti, Michigan where they played a sorta redneck bar with the PIRANHAS (my first time seeing them too). It was one of those shows that will stick with me forever. Floored by the A FRAMES, who capped their set with a monstrous cover of X's "Batman." I've seen 'em many times since and every time has been great, but not as great as that first time, you know? And while I'm into all their albums, their first still stands out for its stark simplicity and repetitiveness.

HUNCHES – "Yes. No. Shut It." (In The Red – 2002)
Mind-blowing. Loud and fucked up, but not just *loudandfucked* for the sake of it. Chris Gunn is one of the most fun guitar players to watch, and just one of the best around. That, plus the thoroughly solid rhythm section grounds what could easily be a total fucking mess of a band.

Runners up: LOST SOUNDS – "Black Wave" LP (Empty – 2001), TYRADES – LP (Broken – 2003), MASONICS – "Masonic Machine Turns You Up" LP (2002), BUSY SIGNALS – LP (Dirtnap – 2007), NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – LP (Kick N' Punch – 2003); MYSTERY GIRLS – LP (Trickknee – 2002), HEX DISPENSERS – LP (Alien Snatch – 2007), EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – LP (Dropkick – 2006), PISSED JEANS – "Shallow" (Parts Unknown – 2005)

7"s:
HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE – "Gnarly" EP (Wrench – 2000)
HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE at their finest. Fast, funny, smart. *Gnarly* includes the absolute classic "Dee Dee Ramone," followed by "3.5 Revolution." The HFOS albums are all also great, but they hold up most memorably on 7"s. Breathless.

HUMAN EYE – "Rare Little Creatures" EP (Disordered – 2007)
What I wrote for the CLONE DEFECTS applies for HUMAN EYE. The *Rare Little Creatures* single makes this list partially because I wanted to make room on the LP list for a non-Timmy Vulgar band and partially because "Rare Little Creatures" is one of those exceptional songs that just lodges itself in

your brain and sticks there for years.

HEX DISPENSERS – "Lose My Cool" EP (Douchemaster – 2008)
If I had more room, their first LP would've made the album list. As it is, I have to settle for the HEX DISPENSERS' awesome *Lose My Cool* 7".

BASEBALL FURIES – "I Hate Your Secret Club" EP (Estrus – 2004)
For the title song alone. The other songs are decent, fairly standard fare, but "I Hate Your Secret Club" had the almighty BASEBALL FURIES leaning in an unexpectedly poppier vein than they showed on their earlier records. Foreshadowing a bit of what would come in the TYRADES. Still tough, but catchy. A perfect combination.

RIVER CITY TANLINES – "Black Knight" EP (Misprint – 2005)
Alicja Trout's post-LOST SOUNDS endeavors have gotten less attention than her former bandmate's. Too bad. She's a killer songwriter and the band she put together for RIVER CITY TANLINES helps prove it. The bass in "Black Knight" is not to be fucked with!

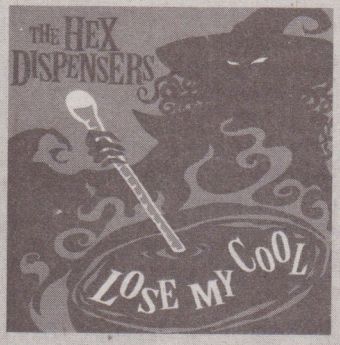
CARBONAS – "Frothing at the Mouth" EP (Douchemaster – 2004)
Fast, catchy as hell. Sure the BLACK LIPS became the darlings of Atlanta, but for my money, the CARBONAS take the crown. Not always the most exciting live band, they made up for it in spades on record.

NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Das Reich / Secret Police" (Backwards Masking – 2003)
Yet another single that gets included, at least in part because, there wasn't enough room to include their album. I think people more into hardcore have mostly written off NHFTK, but for suckers like me who like their hardcore with a strong dose of melody (think TOXIC REASONS), I still can't get enough. The flip side of this, "Secret Police," wins out as one of my favorite songs of the decade. Great songwriting all around.

ANGRY ANGLES – "Things Are Moving" EP (Shattered – 2005)
Yes, the "He Hit Me (and It Felt Like a Kiss)"-like song that wraps up this single is fucked up, especially given the outcome of the ANGRY ANGLES. But, like "He Hit Me," "You Call It Love" is a really good song. All four songs here marked Jay Reatard's transition out of the synthy LOST SOUNDS style and into what would become his more poppy solo career. The transition is key. Just stripped down enough, just raw enough.

DRUID PERFUME – "Goat Skin Glue" EP (Italy – 2009)
From the ashes of the PIRANHAS...one of my favorite new bands, and new favorite bands.

LOST SOUNDS – "Don't Bother Me" EP (Solid Sex Lovie Doll – 2001)
I love their *Black Wave* album, and *Memphis is Dead*, and *Rat Brains*... Hell, for such a prolific band they had far more hits than misses, but this record is really a perfect 7". Four great songs, in and out, capped off with the killed "What'd I Say." Unfortunately expensive and incredibly hard to find. Just ask Mitch Cardwell. He spent years tracking down a copy, and that guy is connected! Worth it though.



FRED SCHRUNK

So after spending countless hours flipping through records and re-listening to a good portion of my record collection, I realized ranking the ten best records of the last decade was far too large of an undertaking. Instead I decided to make a list of my favorite pop punk records to come out in the '00s. So here it is, in a very loose kind of order.

THIS IS MY FIST – "I Don't Want to Startle You but They Are Going to Kill Most of Us" EP (Left Off The Dial – 2002)
In my opinion, a perfect EP. Perhaps *the* perfect EP. Four songs, all totally classic. Frantic, aggressive, punk with a touch of pop. These are four of my all time favorite songs crammed into one little 7" record. I would also add their full –length *History of Rats* to my top ten list, but nothing could even come close to this 7". This is quite possibly my favorite record that I own, or for that matter have ever heard. Maybe a lot of that has to do with the point in my life when I first heard it, and then went on to listen to it every day for nearly a year. Seriously, this record is the best thing ever!

SEXY – "Por Vida" LP (Onion Flavored – 2003)
I've gone on the record saying I think this is the best full-length album to come out since the HICKEY LP, and I still hold to that. Totally sloppy pop songs. You can't make an album catchier than *Por Vida*—every song is on this album is absolutely fantastic. Fast, catchy, dirty, and incredibly trashy. Like a shining pop-punk gem you found in a BART bathroom garbage can.

SHOTWELL – "Patriot" LP (Thrillhouse – 2008)
These guys have been a staple of the Bay Area pop punk scene since the mid '90s, and are still more or less a band today. SHOTWELL is like the CLASH mixed with STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, mixed with early-'90s Bay Area pop punk. Over the 15+ years that SHOTWELL has been a band they have gone through so many line-up changes that Jimmy Shotwell himself probably couldn't remember everyone that's played in the band. After all this time and countless releases, this new material is easily the best stuff the band has ever produced. Political, thoughtful, tragic, and brilliant lyrics, backed by high-energy delivery and clever song writing. *Patriot* is one of my all-time favorite albums.

BANANAS – "A Slippery Subject" LP (Plan-it-X / Recess – 2007)
A Slippery Subject is about as over-the-top poppy as you can make a record without becoming annoying. The songs get stuck in your head and are impossible to get out. BANANAS shows are perhaps the funnest thing ever. EVER. Every single kid in the audience (and in the band) is blacked-out drunk, and freaking out. Capital "F" *freaking* out. I've never done ecstasy, but I can only imagine that peaking feels something like a BANANAS show. *A Slippery Subject* is the album that has all the hits, but seriously all four albums are ridiculously good. If *A Slippery Subject* never came out, the BANANAS newest album *New Animals* would be on this top ten list instead.

ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT – "Train I Ride" EP (Half Day – 2003)
Totally fast and grungy pop punk here. It's dirty and gross, but sort of melodic with a total buzz saw guitar. ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT also features the best living female punk singer. The lyrics are super soulful lyrics and touch on politics, the community, and self-awareness. Easily the second best 7" to come out this decade. Hands down. Fuck, it's hard to write ten extremely glowing reviews of your favorite records. I've listen to *Train I Ride* so many times that I can't possibly compare it to anything but itself.

FLESHIES – "Kill the Dreamer's Dream" LP (Alternative Tentacles – 2001)
Over this decade, FLESHIES has done a lot of great things and released several really good records, but nothing they've done can come close to the raw intensity of *Kill the Dreamer's Dream*. It's total late-'70s punk; way sped up, out-of-control, and relentless. Guaranteed brain melt. I love this album.

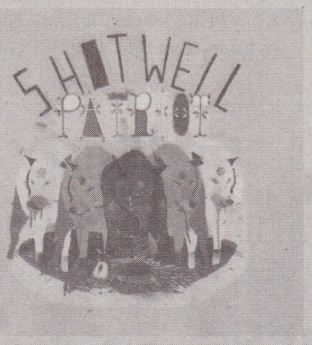
DILLINGER FOUR – "Civil War" LP (Fat – 2008)
Growing up in Minneapolis DILLINGER FOUR was probably the first "real" punk band I got into. They've probably influenced my life more than any

band aside from Nirvana. So obviously *Midwestern Songs* would be near the top of my '90s decade top ten, and actually, near the top of my all-time top ten for that matter. Since that album came out, DILLINGER FOUR's albums have gotten steadily more and more lackluster (don't get me wrong I love them all, and play them constantly); they just lacked the driving brilliance of their first LP and earlier EPs. That is until *Civil War* came out. This is DILLINGER FOUR at their best. It took me a minute to warm up to the songs, but when I did it became super apparent that *Civil War* is solid, beginning to end, and it has some of the best songs DILLINGER FOUR ever wrote.

CARRIE NATIONS – "Be Still" LP (Bitter Like The Bean – 2004)
Be Still has some of the best guitar riffs of any album that came out this decade. It has a slight grunge feel to it, but super catchy. The first half of *Be Still* is totally flawless. High energy, killer guitar parts, cool lyrics; it has it all. The second half kind of slows it down, but in a really cool, interesting, and thoughtful way. All the songs on the second side are really good too, and it works perfectly because side A rocks so hard you couldn't possibly have the stamina to sustain that through a full album. Then CARRIE NATIONS finishes off the album with one of the most rocking songs on it. Fucking incredible dirty DIY pop.

JACK PALANCE BAND – "Get This Shit Under Way" CD (ADD – 2002)
Perhaps one of the most emotionally provocative full-lengths I've ever heard, and tragically, only released on CD up to this point. WTF? JACK PALANCE BAND has my vote for best band to ever come out of Chattanooga. *Get This Shit Under Way* has been the go-to album for me when I'm feeling at my absolute worst. There is some sort of psychic healing going on here. It's kind of magical. Not to mention all the songs totally rule the pop punk world. This fucking album tugs my heartstrings hard and it fucking rules!

MARKED MEN – ? LP (Rip Off / Dirtnap / Swami – 2003-2009)
Oh man, which MARKED MEN record to pick. The MARKED MEN put out several LPs over this decade and they're all so good in equal ways. Not one of their records stands out as the best, or the worst. If I was held at gunpoint and told to choose my favorite, I'd say with only modest certainty that *On the Outside* is best, but fuck man, *Fix My Brain* is totally flawless. And their newest record *Ghosts* has been wearing down the needle on my record player. They're all so good!



GOLNAR NIKPOUR

This list was born of a choice: I could have either meticulously calculated and then picked the records I listened to the most over the course of the entirety of the past decade, or I could pick the records that I loved then and continue to listen to regularly today. Naturally, I chose the latter, despite the fact that this means that a couple of sentimental favorites (the OBSERVERS, HARUM SCARUM, FEROCIOUS X, etc.) hit the proverbial cutting room floor. What a pleasure it was to put this list together and know that I have been listening to some of these records for close to ten years. I am old, and these records will probably rage until after the last bomb.

1. DEATHREAT – "Consider It War" 12" (Partners in Crime – 2003)
Breathtaking and utterly perfect hardcore punk, the effects of which I am *still* trying to cope with. DEATHREAT perfected their *sound* on this record, but also wrote timeless *songs* that don't merely serve to rehash hardcore, but help continue to define it. I would be willing to travel to the ends of the earth to see DEATHREAT play live one more time. With every passing minute this record inches its way up my list—gasp!—to the rank of greatest HC album of all time.

2. GORILLA ANGREB – "Astma" EP (Kick N' Punch – 2004)
In my years in punk, I have watched a lot of bands come and go. Some are heralded as the next big thing, while others are ignored. DIY punk has its own hype-machine, and I know this band got a lot of love through those channels—a lot of it from me!—but the truth is that GORILLA ANGREB was so good that as far as I am concerned they could have been the biggest band in the world. Jubilant one moment, plaintive the next, this may be my most listened to punk EP of 2009, forget about the year it came out. You know what? I have even grown to love the formerly dreaded *Long Island* 7"!

3. TRAGEDY – LP (Tragedy – 2000) and "Can We Call This Life" EP (Tragedy – 2002)
Pleåase ignore the fact that TRAGEDY ushered in the era of stadium crust (which is sadly not yet over in some parts of Europe and the Midwest!) and remember that they produced some of the most flawless, well-executed, well-written, and genuinely moving hardcore of our time.

4. FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002) and side of split EP with DISCLOSE (Whisper In Darkness – 2004)
I bought like, 500 Japanese crust records this decade. Most of them, it turns out, are pretty disposable. FRAMTID, on the other hand writes truly heavy and memorable riffs of the bang that head that doesn't bang variety. This band completely destroys the go-nowhere snooze fest that is the majority of what we call crust.

5. SEX VID – "Drugging" EP (Kill Test – 2006) and "Tania" EP (Dom America – 2007)
There is nothing left for me to say about SEX VID. The first EP channels VOID, the second EP channels the sound of a million ton subway train screeching to a halt, but with like, riffs.

6. DEAD MOON – "Dead Ahead" LP (Tombstone – 2004)
For reasons of trend I can't exactly figure out, pop punk kids got into DEAD MOON about ten years ago and then hardcore kids followed suit about five years later. It is not exactly obvious that either would go for DEAD MOON, a band that shares none of the gimmicks of either genre and who—when you get right down to it—was a weird, lo-fi rock 'n' roll band with some old freaks at the helm. But then again, this record—their best—is full of charm and memorable little guitar parts and of course, that inimitable Cole sound.

7. YOUNG WASTENERS – "We Got Ways" 12" (Kick N' Punch – 2002)
This record is almost garage rock with the way the guitars kind of jangle and the songs are so immediately catchy. When this 12" came out it ushered in a wave of retro imitators that somehow never came very close to matching the very high bar that YOUNG WASTENERS set. Who knew that liking the DEAD KENNEDYS so much could produce something this charming and good? Many bonus points for these genius lyrics: "I hate cops / to the max / it's not my choice / I always have." Fuck yes.

8. TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank – 2007)
Once upon a time, a wise friend of mine compared this band to the RAMONES in the sense that both are bands that have perfected their seemingly simple (but easy to get wrong) genre, and both make a lot of use out of a two-minute song with a basically defined song structure. This doesn't mean that either is generic in the negative sense of the word, but that both manage to create something exciting and fresh off of a template without ever sounding

trite, or making the listener think, "Whatever, this is what their *last* record sounded like." This is what the genius of punk can be when in the right hands—even though you've "heard it all before" there is still room for an explosion of creativity in what seems to be a relatively limited framework. TOTALITÄR is the best Swedish HC band of the past *two* decades, and *Vi Är Eliten* is their best record.

9. CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006) / CALL THE POLICE – demo tape (self-released – 2002)
It seems that Pauly B. is my #1 musician of the past ten years. Way to go, Paul. Both of these releases, one of which I still harbor a hope will someday see vinyl treatment, so perfectly capture the very best about British punk of the early '80s, and really punk of all eras. Maybe it is the doomtown vibe that saturated both bands' sound? I suppose it is just a certain *je ne sais quoi* that makes these bands so good and so many "UK82 styled" bands—including any number of bands from the OG era—so *frakking* boring.

10. SELFISH – "Burning Sensation" LP (Feral Ward – 2002)
SELFISH received so much less acclaim than they deserved, even at the height of the mid-decade Japanese hardcore craze. This despite being endorsed by TRAGEDY, record nerds, Scandinavia, *and* the internet. Perhaps these gentlemen's' flowing hairdos and even more flowing clothing made poor impressions on confused crusters? Maybe it is the excess of guitar solos or insane vocals? Who knows! But it is their loss.

11. I am cheating and listing these anyway:
It is truly difficult to make a list of best punk records in a decade in which I spent most of my waking life listening to punk rock. LIMP WRIST – "Want Us Dead" EP, LEBENDEN TOTEN – everything, OTAN – "El Indomable" EP, HARUM SCARUM – "The Last Light" 12", FEROCIOUS X – both EPs, THE REIGNING SOUND – everything, SILLA ELÉCTRICA – everything, GAUZE – 5th 12", COLD SWEAT – "Severed Ties" 12", THE OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP and "Walk Alone" EP, CONDENADA – "Amor Es Amor" EP, LOOK BACK AND LAUGH – 2nd 12", CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP, SIGNAL LOST – "Prosthetic Screams" LP, MIDNIGHT (PDX) – demo tape, BLACK LIPS – "Let It Bloom" LP.

Best live:
1. DEATHREAT
2. LOOK BACK AND LAUGH
3. CONDENADA
4. TRAGEDY
5. PELIGRO SOCIAL
6. HARD SKIN
7. DSB
8. LIMP WRIST
9. TOTALITÄR
10. SEX VID
11. INEPSY
12. ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT
13. OBSERVERS
14. LA FRACTION
15. RATTUS

DAN GOETZ

I don't know if the following are the ten best LPs and 7"s of the 2000s, but they're the top twenty records that defined the decade for me. Some I loved upon first listen and have continuously since, and some I didn't hear or fully appreciate until years after the fact, and a few I loved, disowned, and then rediscovered.

EPs:
1. AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ – "Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud På Film" EP (Havoc – 2002)
Well, this isn't fair. If this had come out twenty years earlier, it would be going up against LOS OLVIDADOS, JERRY'S KIDS, and the BIG BOYS and shit, but in this decade, it's not nearly as much of a contest. This record is a distant first from the others on this list. The intro could've opened *Suburbia*, or at least should make some sort of appearance in a film (punk documentary or otherwise) at some point. The rest of the songs are raging masterpieces that are as catchy as they are aggressive and intricate. AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ was influenced by the best early-'80s hardcore, but made the sound into their own. The otherworldly guitar lead at the end of "Anarki/Hierarki" still blows my mind.

2. GORILLA ANGREB – "Aborted 2000" EP (Instigate / Feral Ward – 2005)
Since hearing this record, I've opened just about every mix-tape I've made with "Soldat Til Leje." This is the sound of youthful exhilaration combined with soul-grinding tedium.

3. AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ – "De Hjernedodes Nat" EP (Kick N' Punch – 2000)
Makes me want to live in a punk house and skate all day for the rest of my life.

4. GORILLA ANGREB – "Astma" EP (Kick N' Punch – 2004)
A great record that got all the praise it deserved... And with the Danish records out of the way, on with this list...

5. DIRECT CONTROL – "Religious Rampage" EP (Kangaroo – 2004)
The first time I heard this record, I repeatedly jumped off a couch in the house of a near stranger. I then listened to it daily for the next year.

6. ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT – "You and Me, This Is What We're Here For and What We're For Is What We'll Get" EP (Left Off The Dial – 2003)
Recorded right before the US invaded Iraq and in the midst of the members' setting up squats and organizing against the pending war (documented in *Scam!* #5 and later in *On The Lower Frequencies*), there's a passion and urgency to these songs that can only come from this sort of place. Ivy's voice is one of a kind.

7. SEX VID – "Drugging" EP (Kill Test – 2006)
This is the opposite of good times music. I listen to *Drugging* and am reminded of the mindfuck of getting older and knowing that my best times (which were mediocre at best) are behind me—everything I thought I had to look forward to when I was younger turned out to be bullshit. My only outlet for all this is going outside and smashing the bowl that I used to eat cold oatmeal, which will leave me with one less dish, but momentarily feeling better.

8. BAYONETTES – "Dead End Kids / America's Song" (Art Of The Underground – 2006)
The A-side is an amazing, undeniably AVENGERS-influenced pop song that's lyrically sort of "We Are The One," but by and for a crowd that's a bit older, seen more of the world, and been beaten down but isn't giving up. I'm a sucker for good punk songs with hand clap parts.

9. LIGHTS OUT – "Get Out" EP (Youngblood – 2004)
One of the few straightedge/youth crew bands to get everything right. *Get Out* has a burly, blown out recording, which should be a gold standard for this genre. I almost never listen to youth crew stuff anymore, but *Get Out* hits me just as hard as it did when I injured myself in my living room moshing to "Another Look" when it first came out.

10. BEAT BEAT BEAT – "Cheap Time" EP (Douchemaster – 2005)
When I was getting burned out on the then-current hardcore coming out in 2005-2006, a lot of which I felt lacked the energy and creativity of the early-2000s stuff that I cut my teeth on, someone recommended this BEAT BEAT BEAT 7" to me

(along with a CARBONAS 7"). I don't think it left my turntable for the next month, and I remember repeatedly listening to the first thirty seconds of "Cheap Time" over and over again. I soon learned that garage punk can be just as generic and vapid a genre as hardcore, but this record was definitely not a bad initiation.

LPs:

1. LIFES HALT! – side of "Start Something" split LP with WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? (Youngblood / 625 – 2001)
I saw these bands somewhat by chance in the summer of 2001, with next to no knowledge of hardcore at the time, and my life was changed forever. While I like WHN?'s other stuff better, LIFES HALT!'s side of this record is the high point of their career. It was the music I'd needed to discover for years, and though the days where you see a Life's Halt shirt at almost any given show are long gone, it still means something to me.

2. ETA – side of split LP with TEAR IT UP (Deadalive – 2001)
I picked up this record a couple months after the former one, and even at a point where I was rapidly absorbing all things hardcore punk, this record stood out as being less artificially heroic and more reflective of my feelings towards living in a bleak world with little to look forward to. Though this band received nowhere near the same amount of attention as the REGULATIONS, the lyrical themes and songwriting hint at what was to come.

3. 9 SHOCKS TERROR – "Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass" LP (Havoc – 2001 re-mastered reissue)
"Here's some loud music that just sounds like it's saying 'I'm angry. I'm very, very angry.'"

4. DEATHREAT – "Consider It War" 12" (Partners in Crime – 2003)
Their prior LP would be at the top of this list had it been delayed a year, but *Consider It War* is definitely still a solid record, if not quite as much DEATHREAT's own sound.

5. FROM ASHES RISE – "Silence" LP (Witch Hunt – 2001)
Through the wave of bands that had a similar sound, and even FROM ASHES RISE's other records, I found *Silence* to be most noteworthy. The sound of isolation and war.

6. REGULATIONS – "Electric Guitar" LP (Havoc – 2005)
So this is sort of cheating, since the B-side of this record compiles the two 7"s, but *Electric Guitar* is the form in which I generally listened to these songs. Yes it may be a bit dubious for a band living in a college town with a population of 112,000 (Berkeley's population is about 101,000) to be writing songs about "the city," but in a way this is to their credit, as these songs put forth the feeling of bleak living in a larger urban area. As implied above, ETA was a life-changing band for me, and the REGULATIONS records (at least up through this one) spell out the transition from fucked up, go-nowhere teenager to maladjusted adult.

7. TYRADES – LP (Broken – 2003)
I actually got into the TYRADES a few years after the hype died down (I was more interested in the CUT THE SHIT interview when this band graced the cover of *MRR*), and I'm actually sort of glad for it. Everything I like about snotty, aggressive hardcore and snotty, aggressive garage punk is here, and if more hardcore bands listened to this record religiously, they would be better off for it.

8. MODERN LIFE IS WAR – "Witness" LP (Deathwish – 2006)
From their first 7", MODERN LIFE IS WAR has been light years ahead of other modern hardcore, and *Witness* is their best. Eclectic and somewhat unconventional songwriting that offers an impeccable backdrop against Jeffrey Eaton's recounting of his experiences living in Marshalltown, IA, and seeming to come to terms with it as his hometown, for better or worse. Though I've never lived anyplace that's anywhere near as isolated, I've listened to *Witness* many a night that I felt trapped in wherever I was living and plans to get out weren't coming along quite as I'd hoped.

9. MR. AIRPLANE MAN – "C'mon DJ" LP (Sympathy for the Record Industry – 2003)
C'mon DJ isn't the most consistent record, so its spot on this list is carried by the weight of its best songs, which are haunting, mesmerizing garage-pop largely influenced by roots blues.

10. LIMP WRIST – LP (Lengua Armada – 2001)
A timeless, transcendent record (and booklet that is equally an important part of the, um, package) that I'm sure will inspire both queer and non-queer punks for years to come. Some people like the subsequent LIMP WRIST records better, but I feel like that this one is more straightforward hardcore, and the obvious youth crew influence is part of what made it subversive.

xYOSEFx

Here are my top ten LPs and top ten EPs for the first decade of this millennium, excluding releases that aren't punk enough (mostly black and death metal) or DIY enough (pretty much just BLOOD FOR BLOOD) for MRR*'s exacting standards...*

EPs:

DIE YOUNG – "Loss" EP (Hand of Hope – 2008)
One of the only "political hardcore" bands that actually mattered in the last ten years.

GEHENNA – "Land of Sodom" EP (Hit the Deck – 2008)
The Legion of the Seven Crowns still reigns supreme.

IN DISGUST – "Reality Choke" 10" (16 oh – 2007)
Ten inches of hate from the West Coast grind violence machine.

IRON LUNG//HATRED SURGE – "Broken" EP (Iron Lung – 2008)
One of the few truly essential powerviolence records of this century.

LIMP WRIST – "What's Up With the Kids" EP (Paralogy – 2001)
I'm not going to bother explaining how great this is.

PULLING TEETH – "Vicious Skin" 10" (A389 – 2006)
Perfect holy terror hardcore—better than anything INTEGRITY has released since *Seasons in the Size of Days*.

PUNCH – "Eyeless" EP (Discos Huelga/625)
Two parts thrash plus one part youth crew equals the best Bay Area fastcore band since WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

SEARCH AND DESTROY – "English Terror Boys" EP (Endless Quest – 2007)
Skinhead hardcore from the UK taking cues from NEGATIVE APPROACH, VOORHEES and NEGATIVE FX/LAST RIGHTS, this record destroys. I'd kill your family to see them play California.

SYPHILITIC VAGINAS – "Black Motor Covenant" EP (Rescued From Life – 2008)
GISM-worshipping metalpunk that will peel the skin off your face.

TEARS OF GAIA – "Burial" 2x7" (New Eden – 2008)
No excuses, no exceptions, no forgiveness, no compromise: VEGAN STRAIGHT EDGE.

LPs:

BURIAL YEAR – "Pestilence" LP (Adagio 830 / Alone – 2006)
The most sonically destructive Bay Area hardcore band of the last decade.

EXTORTION – "Degenerate" LP (Deep Six – 2006)
Fucking buzzsaw Australian powerviolence a la INFEST, LACK OF INTEREST, and CROSSED OUT.

FRIGHTENER – "Guillotine" LP (A389 / Ghost City – 2007)
Incredibly underrated UKHC, like ENEWETAK meets IRONSIDE.

GEHENNA – "Upon the Gravehill" LP (King of the Monsters – 2003)
It's fucking GEHENNA. How could it be anything but incredible? Still the best band in hardcore. If you don't like it you can fuck off and die.

LOOK BACK AND LAUGH – "By the Pound" LP (Lengua Armada – 2005)
Some of the best hardcore ever to come out of the Bay Area, and that's saying a lot. Narrowing down which of their records to include was no easy task.

MINDSNARE – "The Death" LP (Trial and Error – 2004)
The penultimate LP from Australia's longest-lived and most important hardcore band. If this doesn't make you mosh like an idiot in your bedroom then I feel sorry for you.

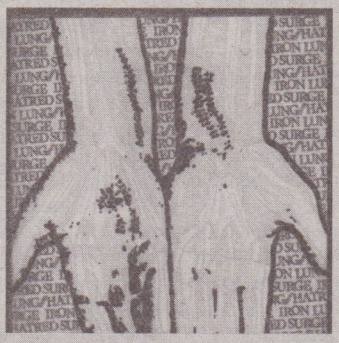
SKIN LIKE IRON – "All Human Failings" LP (Free Cake – 2009)
Trying to describe SKIN LIKE IRON's music as "hardcore" is incredibly limiting. While they come from that scene, the music they play is so much more

than that. This LP comes closest to truly capturing their sound of any of their releases.

THOU – "Tyrant" LP (One Eye – 2007) and "Peasant" LP (Level Plane / Autopsy Kitchen – 2008)
I suppose the "punkness" of a sludge band might seem dubious, but I'm going to include them anyway. They cover MINOR THREAT, they're DIY-as-fuck and their singer is straight edge, how much more hardcore can you get? These guys are my absolute favorite band in the world today, hands down. I can't choose between their two full lengths, so I'm going to cheat and list them together…

TRIAL – "Are These Our Lives?" LP (Equal Vision – 2000)
This is possibly my favorite hardcore album ever, and yet I almost didn't include it in my list due to the fact that it was recorded in 1999 but delayed by the label until well into 2000. TRIAL was a top-tier straight edge hardcore band drawing strongly on the youth crew tradition. They released a demo and some EPs that are excellent, but never stray too far from the sound of '80s and '90s straight edge bands. When they released *Are These Our Lives?*, everything changed. Greg's lyrics here are so much more powerful and profound than those of just about anyone else that it's hard to find anything to compare them to. The songs are musically above and beyond anything any other band in their genre was doing at the time, or has done since. Everything comes together perfectly. I've listened to this record easily five hundred times (no kidding) and I still get chills every time I hear the intro. If I had to choose only one record for this list, *Are These Our Lives?*, would be it.

ZEGOTA – "Reclaim!" LP (CrimethInc – 2004)
One of the only albums to come out of hardcore/punk that I would consider "beautiful" and still want to listen to.



DX

I've focused only on the LPs, because I don't want to take up too much space. I originally tried to leave a bare description, but on consideration it became apparent that a decade is such a long time, there needs to be a bit more than a cursory examination given to such a broad period of time. Punk is still such a young music, barely 50 years old, but the reference points MRR *primarily draws on are restricted to the past 30 years—what a brief period of time! This makes a decade a significant period of time—we're talking about one-third of the time that this music has existed. Given my primary contribution to* MRR *has been rapping about, uh, "international hardcore," I wish I could say that my list wasn't as US-centric as it is, but I'm an imperialist pig and these are the records that mattered to me. No shit. Far from wanting to compile a list for their potential value to a "scene," these are records that kicked my ass and taught me how to hear music, which is utterly significant and important for me personally, and I have no faith in my ability to infer their importance for you, but stick with it. I think it's a good list, an honest list.*

Top eleven LPs of the decade:
TRAGEDY – LP (Tragedy – 2000) / 9 SHOCKS TERROR – "Paying Ohmage" LP (Havoc – 2001)
Brief biographical insight: As the decade clicked over, I hit adulthood. As a present, Jesus granted me these two records in a short period of time. Both of them had a huge impact on my life, but as the decade clicks over I feel a personal preference for the latter over the former. Both were important for a lot of people in a similar way—they both drew on a wider variety of hardcore bands than their contemporaries were acknowledging. And for their references to semi-obscure music from pre-1988 in competently delivered and immaculately produced fast hardcore, they were able to introduce roads across genres that most people to that point could not possibly have traversed. From these two records, the new American hardcore developed its aesthetic and sound, and the rest of the world, as is the case with imperialist innovations, followed suit. TRAGEDY derived their sound primarily from Japanese hardcore but, combined with their history of slugging out the '90s cold war with HIS HERO IS GONE, had a considerable debt to the darkest recesses of American hardcore. 9 SHOCKS TERROR also derived a lot of the ideas for their sound from Japanese hardcore (but in the same way their precursors did in h100s), and combined this with was a love for psych-rock (their HAWKWIND cover introduced me to a genre I'd always considered uninteresting, which has since turned me onto some of the best music/literature), and the American hard rock that was openly credited as an influence to the first hardcore bands (remember GRAND FUNK were covered by two of the most popular '80s hardcore bands, and on polar opposite sides of the country!). As such, these two bands introduced the decade, by summing up the best of the 1990s, and saying "yes, the '80s were the birth of hardcore, and yes, the '90s attempted to neuter it, but this decade will be one of reintroducing the children to the rock for light." And the children said, yeah-hup.

INMATES – "Assholes Unanimous Presents" LP (Human Stench – 2002) / GEHENNA – Negotium Perambulans in Tenebris (Crawlspace – 2000)
The inevitable crush of adult life and its resulting miseries hit hard as I drifted back from a failed attempt to cut ties with a town I hated living in, and these two bands captured that feeling like no one else. From the confines of two separate hells came the two most vicious records I'd ever heard—the perfect listening in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, which I had the privilege of witnessing on live television in the US. Both records sound like everything happening those days—weeks and months after the towers fell, and even to this day they remind me of the confusion and terror that resulted from extensive reading and research into what happened and why it happened. GEHENNA sticks their 1990s sound of thick, burly, "holy terror" hardcore into overdrive with references to West Coast power violence and the Norwegian black metal sound. Their lyrics were the most potently hateful and nihilistic I'd read, and being that this was the time in anyone's life where they discover Bukowski and Burroughs and other degenerate authors offering similar visions of a bleak, reprehensible existence in the modern world, it clicked. INMATES was another Cleveland band that was recommended to me on the strength they had members of INTEGRITY and 9 SHOCKS TERROR, two of my favorite bands at the time. Their record satirized everything I found tedious about chaos punk, drenched in pure disgust, and in the process it retuned my ear to hear the worth in bands like CHAOS UK, GG ALLIN, and further unpleasantries—most importantly unveiling the vitality and raw power of their Cleveland contemporaries.

LOST SOUNDS – LP (In the Red – 2004)
Around the same time, as a flip to aggressive hardcore, I was trying to get my head around new wave and post-punk, definitely hearing reference points that I was comfortable with in some of the more extreme moments It's pretty difficult to hear in it now what I heard at the time as the production is far more cute than I remember, but this is the record that flipped my head to the sound of the synth-punk and black metal, and most specifically non-guitar-based music, from dark wave to disco. Around the time I first heard this record, my friend turned me onto JOY DIVISION and early NEW ORDER, so I was looking for something "contemporary" that sounded like it had heard the GERMS or BLACK FLAG and paid attention. There are a couple of real clunkers on this, but before encountering it I could never have listened to GARY NUMAN, DEVO or the SCREAMERS (!), and it definitely made me take notice of what the band members would go onto achieve.

INFEST – "No Man's Slave" LP (Deep Six – 2002)
Whatever life experiences I'd been enduring, *No Mans Slave* would have made the list. An absolute classic record, INFEST's best recording, posthumously decorated with vocals, and released at just the right time to push everyone back in the direction of fast, malevolent music.

FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)
At about this point, I'd moved to Melbourne and PISSCHRIST were active, the best live punk band to see at the time. They'd basically summed up everything Melbourne was listening to at the moment and D-beat was having an international renaissance. Yeap introduced me to CONFUSE and other bands like DISCLOSE that were indicating the limitless potential that came out of repetitive fast rhythm accompanied by hysterically overblown guitar noise. FRAMTID makes this list because *Under the Ashes* is the best LP to come out of this scene and time period, offering an intensely considered production of super-distorted and blown out hardcore.

YOUNG WASTENERS – "We Got Ways" 12" (Kick N' Punch – 2002)
AMDI-PETERSENS ARMÉ released two of the best hardcore 7"s this past decade and turned me back onto the sound of early-'80s US hardcore. I was recommended *We Got Ways* on the merit that it came from the same town and scene, and it continues to blow me away. I have never been cynical about this record, but many people condemn it for its excessive attachment to the sound of early-'80s LA, and certain moments definitely distract its impact by a litany of reference points that pepper the lyrics. It is credit to the songs and the sound that these criticisms have not reduced the impact of this record to be remembered as a great covers record; it's vital today as it was when I first heard it, which was obviously the point—to write a timeless, undated, classic hardcore record. The K-town bands remain some of the most exciting in contemporary hardcore, but at the point *We Got Ways* was released Copenhagen was *the place* for catchy, snotty hardcore and punk records, and history will remember it.

ANNIHILATION TIME – "II" LP (Six Weeks – 2005 LP) / COLD SWEAT – "Blinded" LP (Parts Unknown – 2005 LP)
With *II* and *Blinded*, ANNIHILATION TIME and COLD SWEAT turned me onto reconsidering the later BLACK FLAG catalog with a new level of appreciation, as they mined ground that I'd never considered FLAG had (PINK FAIRIES, for example), but for the first time I could hear elements of AC/DC as well. More specifically, as BLACK SABBATH had occupied my stereo for most of the months prior, these records flipped me back toward bands that had understood their importance in the same way as I did, so BL'AST sounded better, as did the litany of mind crushing stoner rock and psych rock bands that came out of checking out the scene around SABBATH, PINK FAIRIES and HAWKWIND, and more so the resulting fallout. On top of this, ANNIHILATION TIME had a connection to the Cleveland hardcore that had ruled my life to this point (with Jimmy and Shaun from GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS and PUNCTURE WOUND) and COLD SWEAT with GEHENNA. The tunes on these records would capture the attention of anyone who cares about guitar-based music, and in completely different ways.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – LP (Dropkick – 2006)
This is the record of the decade for me. These guys came around at the perfect time in Melbourne. STRAIGHTJACKET NATION ended up playing a fuckload of shows with them, eventually recording a split 7" of our mutual appreciation for '70s punk (them: PAGANS, us: SAINTS), and solid friendships were formed. This record captures them not at their best, but at their most important for me, personally, but I can promise you that the new decade will see EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING release what will no doubt be top of the list in *MRR* December 2019.

CAROLYN KEDDY

I always hear people yapping about how there are so few good records being put out these days. I usually try to ignore them because I know it isn't true. Then when I have to compile one of these annoying lists, it really hits me how idiotic people are. I could have easily picked many more, but there was no way I could just pick ten. Too bad.

LONG-PLAYERS:
JACK-O & THE TENNESSEE TEARJERKERS – "The Disco Outlaw" LP (Goner – 2009)
If you asked me before April 2009 what my favorite record of the '00s is, I would have said *Don't Throw Your Love Away* by JACK O & THE TEARJERKERS. That was before I heard *The Disco Outlaw*. But now I am faced with a strange philosophical question. How can a record that was released halfway through 2009 be my favorite record of '00s? Inexplicable, but it is. There's no arguing with me. I love this album. JACK-O & THE TENNESSEE TEARJERKERS combine some seemingly contrary and potentially off-putting elements into one amazing record. Garage rock with a southern hillbilly tinge. Great songwriting dripping with honesty and humor. Plus Jack has one of those amazing voices. It is sweet, hot, lascivious, desperate, and aching. I could listen to it all day. This is sleazy, gritty garage blues with a romantic side. It drives me wild. My favorite track is "Sweet Thang." It is so catchy and ardent, it is almost impossible to believe anyone would not be instantly charmed by Jack or any of the Tearjerkers. I obviously am.

SUPERHELICOPTER – "Rock'n'Roll Damnation" 10" (Manuel Wastl – 2000)
In 2000 I just wanted to name SUPERHELICOPTER band of the year and leave it at that. They released my favorite records that year. This 10" was the first I heard and will always be my favorite. I absolutely love it when a band looks really stupid on the cover, has one of those names that sounds kind of generic or they're from Sweden, and then proceeds to kick my ass with fantastically trashy rock and roll.

TYRADES – LP (Broken – 2003)
The TYRADES blew me away. It is as simple as that. They made a fantastic record. They put on an amazing live show. They write incredible, spazzy, short blasts of punk rock perfection. Singer Jenna has an amazing voice. It is tough and authoritative. The band is right there with her blazing through the tunes at break neck speed. Then they were gone just as quick. Alas. As my co-worker once commented to me, this is a perfect punk record. I couldn't agree more, so I played it a few thousand times. I never get sick of it.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – LP (Dropkick – 2006)
I'll never forget that night I got a call from Ryan Wells to tell me to check out EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING when they were in SF opening for some bands I would have never considered going to see. I am so glad I took his advice because I cannot believe how amazing ECSR is. Why they were the opening band still blows my mind. All of the best aspects of Australian punk: catchy songs, interesting rhythms, and just enough attitude performed by good-looking boys. I picked up this LP at the show. When I got home, I listened to it immediately—the same night. When does that ever happen? Unfortunately, they haven't made it back to SF yet, but their second LP *Primary Colours* is equally fabulous.

THE MIGHTY MOGULS – "Teenage Party with the Mighty Moguls" CD (Deckrec – 2001)
I am never very lucky with review CDs at *MRR*, but fortunately I ended up with this one. The MIGHTY MOGULS are so fantastic; I just can't stop talking about them. People are always asking me what new records they should get and sometimes I will have a hard time coming up with something. With The MIGHTY MOGULS, I was telling people before they had a chance to ask. Sounds like a female-fronted, slightly poppier version of TEENGENERATE. So much fun.

TY SEGALL – LP (Castle Face – 2008)
There was a point when I was *MRR*'s resident one-man band expert. Maybe I am again. I'll have to check the stats. But a few years ago I became disillusioned with the genre. All these one-man bands were starting to sound too similar and uninteresting. Fortunately, TY SEGALL renewed my love for the one-man band when he released this LP in 2008. Stomping garage tunes that are dirty and distorted and rollicking and so much fun. I just can't get enough.

FM KNIVES – "Useless and Modern" LP (Broken / Moo-La-La – 2002)
One of those records that every time you hear it, you immediately get happy. Peppy and poppy like first wave punk. Anthemic and catchy, but with seemingly little effort. FM KNIVES were something truly magical.

CHEATER SLICKS – "Yer Last Record" LP (Secret Keeper – 2002)
I was afraid CHEATER SLICKS had given it up in 2002 with *Yer Last Record*, but I was so happy to see them resurface a few years later. Their music has remained consistent throughout the many musical fads of the last decades. It is rare to find a band that sticks to their sound, yet manages to always release an album of great new songs. Cheater Slicks do it. The two-guitar assault with the pounding drum emphasis makes them one of the most exciting bands ever. This album captured them at a great point. The

songwriting is top-notch. The music is killer. It is a fabulous record.

CONTAMINATORS – LP (Going Underground – 2008)
This record encompasses everything I enjoy about punk rock. Uncomplicated tunes with an annoyed and/or bored vocalist that are crudely recorded. Songs titles "Drivin Me Crazy," "No Friends," "Sick Society," and "Ain't So Fun" add more attitude to the mix. This is the type of LP someone will dig up twenty years from now and proclaim it as one of the lost gems of 2008. Ugh. Get off your ass and buy it now. Plus Contaminators are an amazing live band.

DIRTBOMBS – "Dangerous Magical Noise" LP with 7" (In the Red – 2003)
It is close to impossible to pick just one DIRTBOMBS album over another. But I did what I had to do, so let me say that any one of their records could have easily been here. *Dangerous Magical Noise* features all original tunes crossing musical genres, but coming out as one perfect piece. Without a doubt "Stupid" is one of my all-time favorite DIRTBOMBS' songs. If you are like me, you picked up the first pressing of *Dangerous Magical Noise* on vinyl, so you also got the bonus 7" that features two fantastic CHEATER SLICKS covers, "Possession" and "Refried Dreams." This 7" alone could easily be one of the best things the DIRTBOMBS have ever done, and there was no mention of it on the cover, so you were surprised when you opened up your record.

BASEBALL FURIES – "Let It Be" LP (Big Neck – 2005)
Using the best influences of the New York and Detroit underground rock scenes that would eventually spin off to form punk rock, the BASEBALL FURIES are making some of the best music around. Trashy, dirty, and evil music with disaffected vocals. Excellent, catchy songs. A perfect album.

DAVILA 666 – LP (In the Red – 2008)
The crazy rock 'n' roll boys from Puerto Rico really get my blood boiling every time I put this on the stereo and that happens at least once a day. Raucous garage rock with the daring and confidence to include not only the '60s and '70s influences, but the '80s and '90s as well. This record is so fantastic. From the opening band howl through the stomping garage anthems to wild sing-a-longs to a couple of slowish, shoegazing ballads, DAVILA 666 does it all. There seems to be so many genres represented yet it all is combined into one exciting style. It's brilliant, raw and alive.

JOHN WILKES BOOZE – "Five Pillars of Soul" LP (Kill Rock Stars – 2004)
Demented punked-out soul music. A collection of the best songs from their CDEPs inspired by the five pillars of soul: MELVIN VAN PEEBLES, TANIA HEARST, ALBERT AYLER, MARC BOLAN and YOKO ONO. Singer Seth Mahern sings in this wildly high-pitched, bratty voice that seems to blend so perfectly with the soul music his band is pumping out. The songs are unbelievably catchy and so fun to sing along to.

HANK IV – "Refuge in Genre" LP (Siltbreeze – 2008)
The second album from Hank IV caught them at the top of their game. The songs sound angry, but in the best possible way. I can relate. Plus the music is really rockin' and the lyrics are peculiar and very entertaining.

PISSED JEANS – "Shallow" LP (Parts Unknown – 2006)
Lots of screaming, feedback, and insane (and fortunately brief) guitar solos—reminds me a lot of the BUTTHOLE SURFERS back in their heyday. The singer sounds as if he is in agony most of the time and the band is too busy making noise to care. Then out of nowhere comes a very cool riff and everything is turned around. Not to mention the anthemic "Boring Girls," which even features a very BUTTHOLES-esque high-pitched backing vocal. I can't get enough of this stuff. I finally got to see them live this year and I am so glad I did. It was amazing.

THE KONKS – CD (Bomp – 2005)
I had been waiting for the debut full length from these guys for what seemed like forever. I wore out my copy of their debut 7" and couldn't wait to hear more. A three-piece band from Boston that rocks the primitive garage sound with a pissed-off punk attitude. There aren't a lot of bands that can cover AEROSMITH's "Let the Music Do the Talking" and make you have to think, "Who does this originally?"

MUCK AND THE MIRES – "Beginner's Muck" CD (Amp – 2004)
The best straight-ahead garage rock record of the decade. Super catchy and upbeat with all original songs. MUCK AND THE MIRES has the matching clothes and the vintage equipment, but they manage to pump life into a genre that so many manage to run into the ground. Everything I look for in a garage band and they have an amazing female drummer too.

HUSBANDS – "Introducing the Sounds of the Husbands" LP (Swami – 2003)
Introducing the Sounds Of The Husbands has everything I look for in great rock and roll. The HUSBANDS are an all female band with great songwriting, playing, and vocals. Sarah has one of the best voices in music today. It's deep, powerful, and truly amazing. The music is primitive garage, but in that great get-you-off-your-ass way. There are six covers (all cool choices BARBARIANS, BO DIDLEY, CAROL KING, etc.), but it is the original songs that I like the most. "Swept Aside" is a perfect unrequited love, defiant woman song. Fantastic.

EPs:
BLACK TIME – "Dance Party" EP (Bancroft – 2006)
"Girls In The Garage" is so fun, bratty and saucy. It's a simple repetitive song, but then again all the best ones are. The riff is cool and the male and female vocals have just the right touch. I would almost never turn this record over if I didn't remember that the other side has two other great songs on it.

NIX – "Down the Tubes" one-sided EP (self-released – 2005)
Four quick blasts of punk rock attitude. It is finished before you know it, so I just keep playing it over and over. Luckily all four songs are on one side.

FATALS – "Angry" EP (Nasty Product – 2004)
This amazing noisy-as-fuck French band blows me away. How these guys are able to beautifully channel the essence of TEENGENERATE is beyond me. Who cares? They did it. Great songs buried beneath a wall of noise and some coolly, snotty punk rock attitude. So good, in fact, I went all the way to Chicago to see them since that's as far west as they were going. I'm glad I did.

HEAD – "Spend the Night Alone / Killed By Death" (Goner – 2007)
Side A is a decent cover of semi-obscure English new wave band the FATAL CHARMS. But it is Side B that makes this one of the best records. The song is absolutely fantastic. It is concise and very catchy. The lyrics are hysterically funny: "When it came out we couldn't give the things away / But now it sells for five hundred dollars / The only records you buy are on eBay / Just buy some records, I'll send my kids through college / Don't put your records out 'cos no one's gonna care / When a record's only good because it's rare." Thanks to HEAD for summing up my feelings perfectly and making them into a very catchy, very cool song. You've been killed by death.

MAYYORS – "Marines Dot Com LP" EP (Waste Of Oil – 2008)
The MAYYORS play loud, thrashy hardcore garage rock. Is that really a genre? I guess it is now. The music is overblown, but in the best possible way. There is feedback on every song, but just enough and always in the appropriate place. Yet, there is always a melody. This unique combination of sounds is providing some very exciting music.

GUINEA WORMS – "Box Of Records / I'm a Cobweb" (Columbus Discount – 2008)
The A-side "Box Of Records" is about all the people who work at *MRR* and all the people who read it. Face it, if you are bothering to read this list and you are interested in it, than to you there really is nothing better than a box of records. It's an ode to vinyl obsession that humorously remembers to include a small tribute to the singer's girlfriend, which accidentally turns into a comparison with a box of records. Sing it! "There's really nothing better, there's really nothing better, there's really nothing better than a box of records." Side B is equally catchy though less blatant. There is squeaky saxophone too.

MYSTERY GIRLS – "Under My Tongue" EP (Kryptonite – 2005)
Although I do not do drugs myself, for some reason I love songs about doing drugs. I guess I prefer to live vicariously. On this 7" the MYSTERY GIRLS give me four songs, two are about drug taking and would fit in nicely with any 3 STONED MEN song. This record has some of the best and catchiest songs the MYSTERY GIRLS have ever recorded

SMIRK / BEST PALS – split EP (Broken Pals – 2005)
Two of my favorite fun songs available conveniently on one 7". SMIRK's "Cell-phony" is a teasing ode to jerks and their cell phones, complete with the chorus of "Can you hear me now? Can you hear me now?" BEST PALS' "Snack Attack" is a great sing-a-long tribute to the band's enjoyment of snacking. Plus there is one more song from each band. Cool.

FRANCE HAS THE BOMB – "Invisible Angle / Grim Trigger" (Hozac – 2009)
Whenever I play *Invisible Angle* I just want to dance around like Richard Jobson of the SKIDS when they performed "Into The Valley" on *Top Of The Pops*. If you don't know what I am talking about, YouTube it. It is completely silly, a frantic who-cares-what-I-look-like-dance because this song is just too fun.

That's how I feel about FRANCE HAS THE BOMB. Super catchy and danceable poppy garage punk. Fun, fun, fun.

LITTLE CLAW – "Race to the Bottom / Feeding You" (Siltbreeze – 2009)
Self-deprecation has always been a part of punk. LITTLE CLAW takes it to the limit with this super catchy A-side. The singer sounds agitated then starts running out of breath near the end of the song as the race comes to the end. The B-side's "Feeding You" is more twisted with high-pitched vocals and wild guitars.

ANGRY ANGLES – "Crowds" EP (P-Trash – 2005)
I'll probably always like the REATARDS the most of Jay's bands, but when he shares vocal duties with a female, in this case Alix formerly of the LIDS, there is just something really cool about it. Possibly the softer female voice takes some of the edge off his overwrought vocal style, or maybe it is just that they sound good together. Whatever. Great songwriting filled with paranoia and honesty. Plus a really great cover of DEVO's "Blockhead" on the B-side.

ILLNESSES – "I Wanna Die" EP (Pop Quiz – 2004)
This band snuck into San Francisco to play a couple of shows in 1997 and then disappeared without a trace. That is until 2004 when some very nice and smart person decided to release this record of four songs the band recorded in 1997 before they broke up. Peppy punk rock recorded in the lo-fi manner that was all the rage back in the '90s. These songs are so great, it is hard to believe ILLNESSES wasn't more popular.

THE VATICANS – "Digital World" EP (Pure Filth – 2006)
The VATICANS were one of the great treasures of the San Francisco rock scene. They went through a couple of lineup changes, a momentary name change, yet they just kept getting better until they broke up in 2007. Mod-ish pop songs with great female vocals, and a brief lapse into Mancunian punk on the A-side's "Digital World." This 7" isn't enough to satisfy me (fortunately there is also another 7" and a CD), but the great songs, ample attitude, and cool '60s girl group style almost make up for it. The boys do a nice job too.

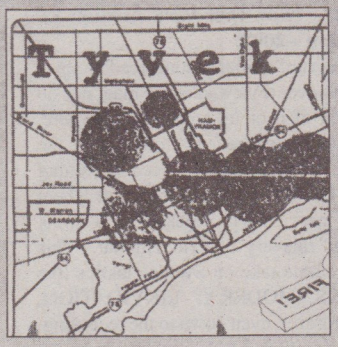
GIANT HAYSTACKS – "A Rebirth of Our City" EP (Pizza Pizza – 2006)
Despite their too-short existence on the scene GIANT HAYSTACKS released a slew of great punk records. Each new release was better than the last. Isn't it supposed to be the other way around? Post-punk the way it was done back in day, yet it sounds fresh, not forced. Minimalist blasts of music with political lyrics. The songs are so good you don't really think about the message until you are humming it on the way home. Hah-hah.

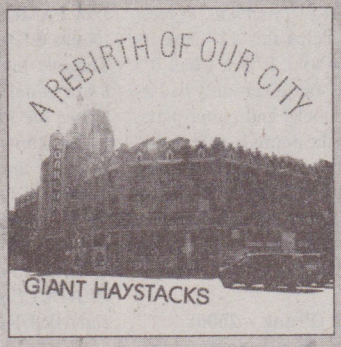
TYVEK – "Summer Burns" 2 x 7" (What's Your Rupture? – 2007)
Post-punk the way it was done back in the '70s. Urgency, guitars, and really great songs. When I saw TYVEK live I had to own the song "Give It Up," which is on the 2x7." Ever since that purchase I have had to buy everything they put out.

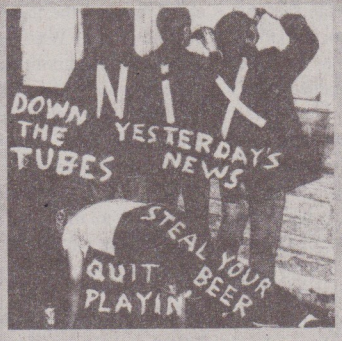
THE SKI INSTRUCTORS – "Kids on the Street" EP (Dulc-I-Tone – 2007)
This record is just too good. Very catchy songs from ex-members of NAR, PRETTY GIRLS, FM KNIVES, LOS HUEVOS, and many other Sacramento bands. Two perfect pop songs.

HEARTBEEPS – "A Boring Life With No Guitar" EP (Frantic City – 2008)
These French garage punks only released this one great EP. Trashy, wild punk songs and a LOVE cover too. Featuring two ex-TV KILLERS, so you know this is cool.

ROYAL PAINS – "Get Punched" EP (Jonnycat – 2006)
I found this in a record store free bin. Why? Maybe because it is slightly warped, because if anyone listened to *Get Punched* and thought it sucked they should just end it now. The title track is too cool—screechy female vocals backed by a deep-voiced male singing about fighting. They make it sound like so fun, you just have to sing along. The others songs are equally good—catchy riffs with the playful male-female vocals. Great stuff.







STEVE SPINALI

CAREER SUICIDE – "Anthology of Releases, 2001–2003" CD (Kangaroo / Deranged – 2004) and "Anthology of Releases Vol. 2, 2003–2005" CD (Deranged – 2006)
Toronto's CAREER SUICIDE shows complete prowess with terse, muscular HC that can also be surprisingly distinctive.

COCKSPARRER – "Here We Stand" CD/LP (Captain Oi! – 2007 CD / Pirates Press – 2009 LP)
While hardly as consistent as their classic debut LP, this record is one of the more spirited, yet world-wise Oi! records ever. At times, it's kind of moving.

DILLINGER FOUR – "Civil War" LP (Fat – 2008)
This band is so consistent that it's hard to pick a favorite, but the impassioned melodic punk here is mighty convincing.

HAWAIIAN6 – "Souls" CD (Pizza of Death – 2002)
Textured, thundering, and somehow melodic punk from this hardworking band has also won fans with their live shows.

MIKA BOMB – "The Fake Fake Sound of Mikabomb" CD (Damaged Goods – 2001)
It would be hard to top 1999's *Super Sexy Razor Happy Girls*, but this CD offers a varied collection of rockers set to the rumble of a motor-bike beat.

POIKKEUS – "Jarjetön Maailma" EP (Crust War – 2003)
Japanese crust on a Finnish sleeve? Yeah, LAUKAUS did it, too, but POIKKEUS wins hands down for sheer mayhem.

THE PONYS – "Laced with Romance" LP (In The Red – 2004)
Riffy energy infuses this amazing '60s punk, with a remarkable use of stereo and effects to update the sound.

SORRY FOR A FROG – "Happy Songs for Fuckin' People" LP (Diwphalanx – 2007)
This Japanese band plays stop-on-a-dime punk and HC with such infectious fun that you can't stop your toes from tapping the beat.

VITAMIN X – "Rip it Out" EP (Havoc – 2005)
Excessive energy drives every second of this great Dutch release.

YDINASEETON POHJOLA – "Euro-ohjukset" EP (Nightstick Justice – 2008)
The band is well-rooted in the tradition of early-80's Finnish hardcore, but their intensity crosses a number of international borders.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

Of course I'm handing this in late. It just took a lot of time to edit out most of the condescending and negative bullshit. Enough. Here's what made the cut…

LPs:

DEATHREAT – "Consider It War" 12" (Partners in Crime – 2003)

To contextualize my adoration and true fanaticism for this release/band would be to tell you right off the bat that I'd *easily* put this record right below the top slot on a short list of the greatest hardcore records of all time, and (surprisingly) I've gotten a lot of flack for that statement from the purists. *Wah.* I can't understand why this is such a stretch? *Consider it War* has everything one could ask for in a hardcore record, and the lyrics are boiling over with the most accurate and well-directed odes to the origins and scenarios of our rage, our anger, our discontent, our rejection, and our revenge. I mean, *fuck*, on top of the lyrical venom spewed, the anger that swells from the music on this thing… It's pointless to try and put into words how much faith I put into this record and how much its sentiment and sonic aggression mean to me. Flawless.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida es un Mus – 2009) and INVASIÓN – "La Caza" 12" (La Vida es un Mus – 2008)

Couldn't decide between these two and since they are similar in style and share half of the same members, they can also share a spot. Hearing *La Caza* for the first time and doing front flips off the stage to DESTINO FINAL are two defining moments of the '00s for me. They were awakenings to the fact that I can still have my socks *completely* knocked off by hardcore this late in the game. As far as *La Caza* goes, I don't really know what to say besides what I covered in my review of it in these pages last year. I still get chills on every listen just thinking about how ferocious, angry, manic, unstable, crazy, and cold that recorded sound can be manipulated into being. As for *Atrapados*, the same holds true only the sound is more controlled and precise and is more of a night-stalking predator than a mental patient. For my ears, these records are the new high-water-mark at which the quality of everything else is measured from here on out.

OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP (Vinyl Warning – 2004)

This one occupies the third slot for personal reasons slightly more than sonic ones, but that doesn't necessarily mean I don't think it's musically worthy of such a slot. You see, I spent five weeks on the road with the OBSERVERS on their tour to support this record, and if it weren't for that tour, my life would be *so* much different now. I certainly wouldn't live in SF. Certain parts of this record just remind me of amazing moments of that tour frozen forever in time; laughing deliriously with Doug, Colin, Mikey, Ian, and Ben in that small gray Dodge van driving to Athens through a hurricane and the disappearing stick-and-poke tattoos when we got there, almost getting left behind in Minneapolis, sleeping on a roof in Brooklyn (RIP Jamie), wasted beyond belief, playing to two people in New Orleans, and all the stupid games we made up in the van to kill time. At the same time, other moments of this record are just so damn good on a creative level that I still get chills hearing them. It angers me to no end that some fucking dipshit stole my red vinyl copy that I got at the end of that tour and I now only have the Yellow Dog repress. Grrrr. This is a ground breaking record and they got a lot of whack-job comparisons when it came out; everything from the YOUTH BRIGADE thing because Doug actually "sang," to WARSAW/JOY DIVISION…none of this holds any water and the OBSERVERS sounded like nothing anyone had ever heard and they still haven't. It's dark, it's catchy, it's punk, and it's an amazing record. *So What's Left Now?* is an awesome window into what no one was doing at the time, and to repeat myself, still aren't. Even the OBSERVERS never did it again (though they got close with the *Walk Alone* 7").

TOTALITÄR / DISCLOSE – split LP (Your Own Jailer – 2001)

Packaged behind some of the *worst* cover art (a smashed yin-yang) comes one of the best splits ever. It's fucking DISCLOSE *and* TOTALITÄR on the same record!

TRAGEDY – "Vengeance" LP (Tragedy – 2002)

Yeah, the first LP was fan-fucking-tastic and *Nerve Damage* was no slouch either, but *Vengeance*, to me, is TRAGEDY's finest hour. And do I really need to explain why TRAGEDY is the most popular DIY punk band on Earth?

BORN DEAD ICONS – "Salvation on the Knees" LP (Partners in Crime – 2001)

I had always thought of BORN DEAD ICONS as more of a live band until last year when Cissie and I listened to *Salvation on the Knees* incessantly, and I realized the true genius of this band, at least on this record. What really helps this 12" sink its claws into my brain, truth be told, is that I feel it's quite bumbling and awkward, but it certainly has its fair share of great anthemic hooks and guitar parts. Tracks like "War," and, well, the entire B-side really, are some the decade's best tunes. The chorus of the song "Salvation on the Knees" brings at least a solitary, if not more, fist in the air every time through, regardless of whether I'm alone in my room listening to this, or at work, or on the bus.

CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP (Prank – 2006)

This decade has seen Japan produce some absolutely incredible records (FRAMTID LP, FEROCIOUS X 7"s, a fucking GAUZE LP, and countless others) but to me, *Bloody Tear* is the one to beat. It's funny 'cause I only pull this out when working on lists like this, and listen to those others quite often, but fuck, if this isn't one of burliest records based on the first riff of the first song on the first side alone.

INFEST – "No Man's Slave" LP (Deep Six – 2002)

If you don't understand, it's time to quit hardcore. Who'd have thunk that INFEST's most ripping record would be the one that sat on the shelf, unfinished, for five years! "I've grown cold inside / And I don't give a shit anymore!"

KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO – LP (Spild af Vinyl / Hate / Tuska & Ahdistus – 2007)

This KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO LP has a wild wreckless spirit not put to vinyl since CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS. It's pure insanity that anyone could compose pieces like this, and two years later I still have a hard time wrapping my head around it.

EPs:

TOTALITÄR – "Spela Bort Allt Du Har" EP (Död & Uppsvälld – 2002)

An all-time top-five 7"er for me. Really, TOTALITÄR only did one record that wasn't a stone cold classic in their 20-plus year existence, and that is quite a fucking feat. Everything they did this decade is better than 99.9% of everything else that came out between 2000-2009. I chose *Spela Bort Allt Du Har* 'cause I feel it perfectly captures what TOTALITÄR does best. There isn't another band on Earth whose riffs and guitar sound are as instantly recognizable to me, whether it's a faster-paced ripper or one of their more mid-tempo monsters, there is never a bum note. Since its release in 2001, this record has spent more time on my turntable than any other and has made an appearance onto every mix I've made. I just wish we could all have the privilege of twenty more years of TOTALITÄR records.

WASTED TIME – "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake – 2007)

Brace's reference of a song from *No Shore* in his review of WASTED TIME's *Futility* LP a few months back featured one of the best quotes I've heard in a while, which said something to the effect of, "…not '80s hardcore revival, it's '80s hardcore removal." And that's not too far from the truth. Not since the early days, has there been a record in the classic American style of hardcore that comes off as angry and intelligent and aware as *No Shore*. Haven't listened to this in a while until today and I'm just as stoked as I was the first time.

DH PAMOASH – "Spy Och Vara Äcklig" EP (Noise & Distortion – 2007)

This one might seem unfamiliar to some readers since I don't think it was ever reviewed in the mag, nor do I ever see mention of it or its greatness anywhere. I also know zilch about the band other than the fact that they are Swedish and the second coming of MODERAT LIKVIDATION, to the point where the first song on here, "Jävla Tjockis," is a direct and acknowledged thievery of "Tio Timmar." This 7" is the most accurate take on Swede classics like HEADCLEANERS, MODERAT LIKVIDATION, and ABSURD in forever, even down to the recording.

KIELTOLAKI – "Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen" EP (Combat Rock / Moo Cow – 2007)

Often referred to as "the red one" or "the orange one," depending on whether it's the Finnish or US press, this EP is a fine destructive example of the straightforward classic Finnish hardcore sound. *Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen* wonderfully captures the screaming guitars, howling vocals, and melodies of perfect hardcore.

NEEDLES – "Twisted Vision" EP (Lengua Armada / BS – 2008)

Lazily cut-and-pasted from my 2008 Year-end top ten: "…The pounding riffs would be enough to best most any band out there, but when you throw in the crazy ass drumming (just listen to the first change in 'Filling Holes,' the way the riff just trudges on and the drums go into that sick fucking high-hat part), it's mind-blowing." This part still gets me all google-y eyed and twiztid a year later, and this platter gets weekly spins. Great fucking band and I'm equally stoked on their brand new EP.

DEATH TOKEN – "4-Track Attack" EP (Even Worse – 2007)
Since they seem to get better with each release, I'd absolutely *love* new DEATH TOKEN material, but I'm still really feelin' this one from a couple years back. Just great raw blistering hardcore from Denmark, the way it should be played. Love the guitar leads on this.

KRIEGSHÖG – "Hardcore Hell" EP (Hardcore Survives / Heartfirst – 2008)
While spinning this 7" was the perfect time to accidentally rub my eyes with jalopeño fingers (yes I did really just do that). With song titles like "Nuclear Blood Rain," you should know to expect shockwaves of irradiated savage disorder moving through the walls of your home with each tiny ridge in the grooves of this record.

FUCKED UP – "Police" EP (Deranged – 2003), and "Litany" EP (Test Pattern – 2004)
Two killer 7"s that showcase a good hardcore band at its peak. Which is in stark contrast to what's going on these days, and all the idiots that see FUCKED UP as "peaking" now. Yeah, they've gotten incredibly creative in their old age and have written some cool stuff since but you can't fuck with *Police* or *Litany*. And that's all I know about that.

EVE – "Kyozou" CD (Blood Sucker – 2006)
That's right, a CD! And it's one of the most boiling-over rippers on this list. Someone, *please* release this on vinyl. *Please*! As far as I know this is the sole release from this Japanese band, and what a "release" it is. *Kyozou* is one of those examples where the energy of a live show really comes through in the recording, and when you're playing like your life is about to end, the outcome is quite spectacular. The five tracks here are in the vein of classic Japcore shit like NIGHTMARE or something, and could for sure stand beside the masters. Ace.

SEX VID – "Tania" EP (Dom America – 2007)
The first time I saw these folks play live, which just so happened to be in my own living room and well before the hype machine took over, I knew SEX VID was really something special. There is a reason that *Maximum Rocknroll* has spilled so much ink over and really embraced this fine band, and it's because they *fucking rip*! I will say that these days, the majority of SEX VID fans can fuck off. Hardcore is for hardcore, live it or leave it. Now, when I go to their shows the only thing that seems appropriate is feet-first stage dives into mustached poser faces. And that is of no fault of the band because they will always be great. Towards their genesis, no one sounded like (or was trying to sound like) SEX VID, no one had art like SEX VID and no one looked like SEX VID. The first 7" was great, as were *Nests* and the *Communal Living* LP, but *Tania…Tania* was powerful. *Tania* was sexy and ugly at the same time. And *Tania* fucking hates you.

Runners up:
LEBENDEN TOTEN – "State Laughter" LP and "Near Dark" LP (Wicked Witch), and "Death Culture Depravation" 8" (Overthrow)
EXTORTION – "Liar" EP (Eerie)
DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Raw Energy" EP (Sorry State)
NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Angels of Destruction / Cold Touch of Death" and "Das Reich / Secret Police" 45s (Backwards Masking)
Every other TOTALITÄR record released this decade.

KENNY KAOS

I suppose it sort of goes without saying that you can't put together any sort of a top anything list without leaving out deserving contenders. So, right off the bat, I can tell you that, among others, the HIVES, EPOXIES, YUM YUMS, TYRADES, CARBONAS, SHITTY LIMITS, and PNEUMONIAS all deserved to be on the final list. I believe it was our friends EATER that once sang, "There's only room for one, and it's always her…" And while a "best of decade" should maybe be geared towards LPs, I'm a 7" kind of guy, so I had to include a few. As always, these come in no particular order…

DETROIT COBRAS – "Life, Love and Learning" LP (Sympathy for the Record Industry – 2001)
As far as I know, this is strictly a cover band. The DETROIT COBRAS are also a (relatively) new find for me, despite the fact that they've been around for some time. They take (relatively) obscure rock and blues and soul and re-invent it with a sense of urgency and a genuineness that results in the band sort of reclaiming these old 'classics' as their own. That probably makes no sense. If you know the band, you probably know what I'm trying to say. If you don't know the band, I challenge you to go out, buy a record or two of theirs, and see if you can do a better job of describing their music. It's also probably worth mentioning that Rachel Nagy has one of the sexiest voices in the history of rock music. You really can't go wrong with anything THE DETROIT COBRAS have ever put out. This is one that I have sort of re-discovered lately and it has a nice balance of the slower, bluesy numbers, and the more rockin' numbers. Oh, and I am, without any doubt, the boss with the hot sauce.

RIVER CITY TANLINES – "All 7 Inches Plus 2 More" LP (Dirtnap – 2006)
This is a compilation of RIVER CITY TANLINES' first few 7" records, plus "two more." It seems kind of weird to me to take a bunch of 7" records, add a couple more, and then turn it into and LP, but the songs on this record are so fucking bad-ass, that I couldn't leave it behind. This is driving, pounding, melodic, full-sounding punk rock led by a female vocalist that is just compelling. It's the kind of record that takes a couple of hours to get through because you keep repeating songs.

THE BUSY SIGNALS – LP (Dirtnap – 2007)
For all the pop punkers/power poppers out there, Atlanta and Chicago dominated the first decade of this century, at least in my mind. THE BUSY SIGNALS are one of the Chicago bands that made a difference. They had 7" records that were worthy of being on this list. I chose their first LP. This is classic, female-fronted power pop that just never lets up. It's catchy. Hell, it's infectious.

THE DIALTONES – "Short Sharp Shock" 12" (Radio Blast – 2000)
Magnus Sellergren, the frontman for this short-lived punk 'n' roll outfit has gone on to many other projects (these PLASTIQUES, HEARTATTACKS and, most recently, the POPPETS), all as solid and worthwhile as this one. Still, this was his first – or if it wasn't his first, it was the first I knew of. The Swedes, really all of the Scandinavians, are for whatever reason just really, really good at belting out fast, catchy, melodic punk 'n' roll that leaves an impression.

MARVELOUS DARLINGS – "I Don't Wanna Go to the Party / Careerist" (Deranged – 2008)
This is without any doubt one of the best power pop singles ever put out. It made my top ten of 2008, is now making my top ten of the decade, and as I said before it will stand the test of time. If you are not hip to these guys, look for this and anything else they have released. Seriously, put it on the turntable, and I guarantee within 30 seconds you'll be tapping your leg, shaking your head, and singing along. You might even take on the singer's accent.

SNEAKY PINKS – "I Can't Wait" EP (Rubber Vomit – 2005)
If I'm not mistaken, these cats are—or at least "were"—from the Tucson area. This started out as a very limited release that came with a foil pic sleeve. Very cool. Since then it's been re-released at least a

couple of times. The original is probably a big time collectors item. Or maybe it's not. In any case, it is one of the best DIY, lo-fi punk anthems that I have heard in quite some time. I own the original, but I still buy every re-release that I come across. Perhaps the most punk rock record on this list.

GENTLEMAN JESSE (AND HIS MEN) – LP (Douchemaster – 2008)
This is classic power-pop-punk rock. Some people might take this the wrong way, but it's got a certain "singer-songwriter" quality to it. I can tell you this, I can't get this fucking thing off my turntable. There's not a single dud on the whole record. Of all the bands on this list, GENTLEMAN JESSE is probably the one I expect the most of going forward.

EXPLODING HEARTS – "Guitar Romantic" LP (Screaming Apple – 2002)
Given that most of the members of this band died in horrible car accident after the release of this record, this might be a sentimental choice for many. It's also a great fucking power pop record that will ultimately be considered a classic. I could listen to "Modern Kicks" ten times every single day for the rest of my life. All nostalgia aside, in my mind *Guitar Romantic* is the best record on this list.

THE BRIEFS – "Hit After Hit" LP (Dirtnap – 2000)
These guys were, in my mind, sheer genius. They combined a classic pop punk/'77 retro-sound with lyrics that were just disgustingly clever. While THE BRIEFS are no longer, they have a few other records that were worthy of being on this list. I chose *Hit After Hit* only because it was their first. You always remember your first. Do yourself a favor and check out the lyrics as you bounce your head on your way to a concussion.

KNUGEN FALLER – "Inte Som Ni" EP (Cage Match / Ny Vag – 2005)
The Swedes are, among other things, accomplished at the pop punk genre. This is a classic example of that—this one with female vocals, some horns, and a catchiness that won't let go. The four songs are sung in Swedish, and still, every time I put it on my wife sings along to the title song, "Give me some meat, give me some meat." That alone got it on this list.

CHRIS HUBBARD

As I'm sure is apparent from the other lists here, the rules for this "Top Ten" were fairly open-ended. Here's how I decided to compile mine: 1) Only list records that were recorded in the 2000s (therefore DEATHREAT's first LP is off-limits, even though it wasn't released until early 2000)—otherwise, any old recording that came out this decade would be eligible. 2) Base the list on my favorite recordings, the ones that hold the most meaning to me personally. Because of this, I found it difficult to include records from the last two years. Anything that recent just hasn't had enough time to make a serious impression. 3) Only include one release per band. So, without further ado:

1. COMPLICITÉ CANDIDE – "Zapalte Ohne/ Mrtvi Havlove" LP (Malarie / Active – 2001)
A great band with a number of releases under their belt; this LP (their second) was my first exposure to them. The perfect LP: varied, distinctive, catchy, loose, driving, strange, noisy, obnoxious, challenging… What attracted me to punk music as a suburban teenager in the mid '90s, among other things, was its incomprehensibility. It was a completely foreign world of sounds and ideas I had never heard or considered, and I was compelled to discover and experience as much as I could. Well, it's been a rewarding journey, but approaching fifteen years from that point, I'm naturally getting somewhat diminishing returns. A hardcore band today that sounds like a hundred others just doesn't hit me like it did years ago. I'm fortunate to have been introduced to COMPLICITÉ CANDIDE, therefore, because this LP blows my mind now just the same as the CLASH and BLACK FLAG and MINOR THREAT did as a teenager; the same as the WIPERS and the BIG BOYS and RUDIMENTARY PENI did when I first heard them in my early 20s. It's the most you can ask for from a record…

2. YOUNG WASTENERS – "Waiting" EP (Hjernespind – 2006)
Their album is great but ultimately mundane in comparison to this curious EP. A pair of more straightforward tracks bookended by two beautifully ugly exercises in arty punk misanthropy.

3. SEX VID – "Drugging" EP (Kill Test – 2006)
I'm not going to wax poetic about SEX VID again in *MRR*, but I will say they're my favorite hardcore band of the last five years. All their records are great—and in different ways—but this one has the more significance for me.

4. COMPLICATIONS – demo (self-released – 2004)
COMPLICATIONS have released a couple good pieces of vinyl in the last few years, but nothing matches this fully realized recording. All the gloominess of the best of Northwest punk delivered with the heaviness and drive of BORN DEAD ICONS. Please release this on vinyl!

5. TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank – 2007)
Forget GAUZE, *this* is the best album recorded by a hardcore band that's been around since the '80s.

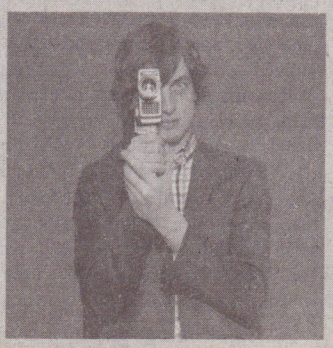
6. NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Das Reich / Secret Police" (Backwards Masking – 2003)
A-side is a decent straightforward punk tune, but the flip is a seriously timeless, classic tune and a contender for the single best stand-alone punk song produced this decade. I love the lyrics imagining a totalitarian state's twisted line of thinking: "We want the public to know that we love them / Wanna teach the people respect / So we formed the secret police to control them…"

7. DEATHREAT – "Consider It War" 12" (Partners In Crime – 2003)
OK, while it's not my favorite release by this band, it's the only one that qualifies for this list… and it's a crushing record. The first two tracks on here are possibly the best they've ever written. Musically and lyrically, DEATHREAT did things *better* than just about every other band at the time. Also one of the five best live shows I've seen.

8. TRANZMITORS – "We Are All Alone With You / Between Planets" (Seeing Eye – 2007)
Maybe not deserving to be on this list over other releases because one of the songs is a cover, but as I said in the introduction, it's my own personal favorites. Two great pop tunes, no filler.

9. LA FRACTION – live at ABC No Rio tape (2003)
Maybe even less deserving than #8 because it's just a tape my friend Ned recorded at a show on this French band's 2003 US tour, but if you're a by-the-book character, just substitute in LA FRACTION's *Aussi Long Sera Le Chemin* LP since most of the songs are off that record anyway. This particular show came at a low point in my life and reminded me there were things that made it worth living, and it always brings back that feeling every time I listen to this recording (yeah, sorry for the *HeartattaCk* moment). It features some passionately delivered melodic French punk rock plus Ned talking over the music to some unidentified person how it took him five hours to get to the show from Philadelphia.

10. TRAGEDY – LP (Tragedy – 2000)
Not really in my daily rotation so much any more, but this album deserves at least the #10 spot on my list due to the number of times I played it or saw the band live (probably close to 30—that's a lot!). For me, TRAGEDY was *the* hardcore band of the 2000s. Often imitated, never duplicated.



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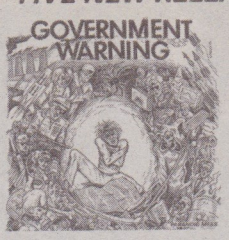

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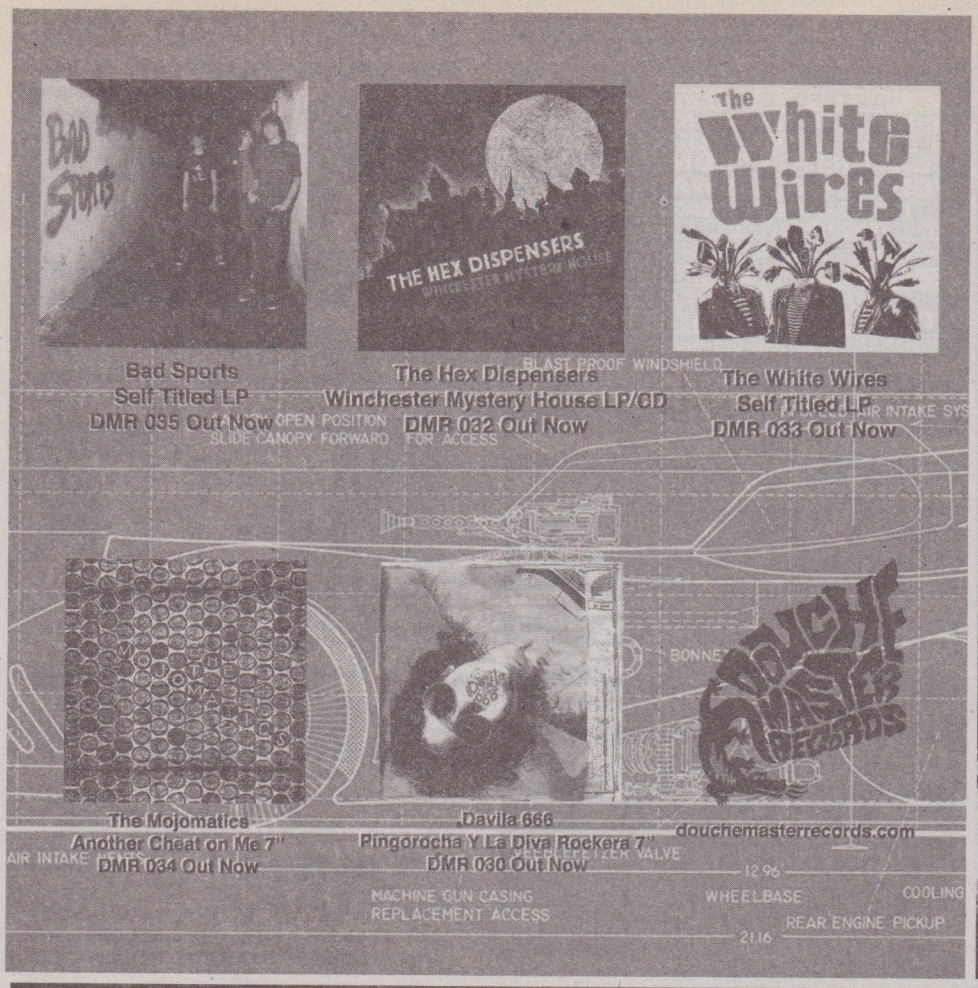

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LPS:

1. INFEST – "No Man's Slave" LP (Deep Six – 2002)

Even though this album was at least partially recorded in the mid '90s it wasn't released until the 21st century, and supposedly at least some of it was recorded then. I remember I almost couldn't believe it when I laid eyes on the lost INFEST album in the Dead Alive distro bin. What can I say about one of my favorite HC bands ever? What can I say about an album that totally lives up to their previous legacy but also has a distinct flavor from each previous release? Perfect hardcore, and in 2002 it was fresh as could be. This is probably the record I've played the most this decade. "My World My Way" is an excellent way to close out a brutal career.

2. PAINTBOX – "Earth Ball Sports Tournament" CD/LP (H:G Fact – 2000 CD / Prank – 2008 LP)

While I enjoyed PAINTBOX's recent *Trip Trance & Travelling* (2009), *Earth Ball Sports Tournament* occupies a place in my heart that few other albums can. It's one of the most grand-scale hardcore albums ever, layered with raging vocals, harmonized chants, orchestral flourishes, blinding guitar arpeggios, all while never really departing from full-tilt Japanese style hardcore. I've said this before, but Chelsea is one of the few guitar players in punk that could dig into my soul with his playing and style—nowhere is that more abundant than on this album. The day I heard of his death I laid on a riverbank and played back the PAINTBOX discography on my headphones, lamenting that I'd never see this genius play his guitar in the flesh. I am rarely this sentimental, but while so much music I own and enjoy is of the negative and hopeless variety, *Earth Ball Sports Tournament* is an album that exudes hope and beauty as much as it does punk rage. When they bury me, play "Music Color and Dream."

3. INEPSY – "Rock N Roll Babylon" LP (Feral Ward – 2003)

While I feel each INEPSY record is great in its own way, and each has its own distinct twist on their well-worn method and delivery (rock 'n' roll by way of speed and studs: motörpunk), *Rock N Roll Babylon* has remained my favorite since its release. It's a perfect intersection of MOTÖRHEAD, GBH, VENOM, and DISCHARGE, but with riffs so undeniable and perfectly crafted that it's able to stand beside all of these influences. I really believe beyond punk or heavy metal, this is one of the great rock 'n' roll records of our time, and INEPSY is one of the last standard-bearing bands for rock music.

4. COLD SWEAT – "Blinded" CD/LP (Manic Ride – 2004 CD / Parts Unknown – 2005 LP)

After an exceptional debut (*Severed Ties*, Rock & Roleplay – 2002), COLD SWEAT recorded this unexpected masterpiece and unjustly broke up before it could actually be released. The sounds on *Blinded* pick and choose ideas from different eras rearranging the chemical compounds found in each until they are alchemically transformed into something completely new. The feeling is isolation, anomie, desperation, utter despair… While so many bands are singing about these feelings as a means to exorcise them COLD SWEAT is embracing them on *Blinded*.

5. BREATHING FIRE – "Years of Lead" LP (Painkiller – 2008)

I helped to release *Years of Lead*, but I can say confidently it's my favorite release that I've ever been involved with, and that I'm proud to have been a part of it, even in my small way. Blinding power-violence inspired sections crash into crawling torturous sludge, but hardly anything like what you'd expect. I still have trouble finding an easy comparison; it's progressive and genre bending but never in a way that feels compromised or cheesy. It's "hardcore," "grind," "doom" all being abused as indiscriminately as you are in your daily life, by the world around you.

6. CRUDE – "Attitude" LP (Straight Up – 2001 / Feral Ward – 2009 reissue)

Attitude was one of my earlier exposures to Japanese hardcore, and since that time it has remained a total favorite with its soaring harmonized guitar leads, powerful vocals, and great song writing top-to-bottom. It's a perfect encapsulation and continuation of the Japanese "Burning Spirits" sound and it rises to meet the best of the genre at their levels of greatness. Songs like "Stand and Fight Again," "Never Give Up Will Power," and "No Light Soul Of State" have the power to set me free every time I hear them.

7. ANNIHILATION TIME – "II" CD/LP (Manic Ride – 2005 CD / Six Weeks – 2005 LP)

Even as they integrated heaping bong-loads of '70s AOR influence into their formidable BL'AST/FLAG influenced attack, I felt that at the heart of it, ANNIHILATION TIME was always a punk band. They took the things the original generation of punks were raised on (hard rock, heavy metal, proto-punk) and brought them back to the table. They dirtied everything up more, they played it faster, and they wrote some exceptionally good songs in the process. Some of the best shows I've ever seen were ANNIHILATION TIME shows, some of the best days I've ever had were listening to *II* on a car stereo, and a big part of that is because every song on here is great, and virtually perfect. A feast of riffs that's buffet-sized.

8. RUNNING FOR COVER – "Dark Well" LP (625 / Unholy Thrash / Art of the Underground – 2008)

I waited and waited for *Dark Well* to finally see release, and I firmly believe it to be one of the most overlooked releases of its time. Almost like if NO COMMENT had composed an LP, but as much in the actual sound as in the spirit of a record like *Downsided*. Utterly bleak and hopeless, attacking you again and again with short focused blasts of anomie. The performances on this LP are exceptional, and the songs themselves are some of the most brutal to come out of any genre this decade.

9. FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)

For full-tilt distorted D-beat annihilation, FRAMTID was *it* this decade. There were no frills or surprises, just crushing violent sounds in the tradition of all your faves from Japan, Sweden, and wherever. *Under the Ashes* was an instant classic upon release and with good reason. It's simply the best of the style to come along this decade.

10. IRON LUNG – "Sexless//No Sex" LP (Prank – 2007)

IRON LUNG was a prolific band over the last ten years, aside from two proper LPs they dropped multiple split LPs and 7"s, some of their own 7"s, and a wide array of compilation appearances. To date *Sexless//No Sex* sums them up extremely well—a gut-wrenching take on "power violence," but owing as much to the technical side of RORSCHACH, or the industrial noise of GODFLESH. Everything is so focused and so pulverizing that despite the fact that IRON LUNG is two men, it feels like they're one mind.

EPs:

1. MIDNIGHT – "White Hot Fire / Endless Slut" (My Mind's Eye – 2004)

Listen, I know MIDNIGHT is viewed as a "metal" band, but at the end of the day this is as much a punk record as anything else. It's raw, ripping, three chords, and fast, and that's enough for me. It's my number one single of the decade because honestly it's the 7" I listened to the most. No doubt in my mind—I bought this in 2005, and it's been in regular rotation since that time. Both songs are perfect VENOM/MOTÖRHEAD style tunes that just deliver so well for the style and sound that they're impossible to deny. At the end of the day the thing that matters most to me is good tunes and these are two of the best.

2. FUCKED UP – "Baiting / The Public" (Deranged – 2003)

FUCKED UP was one of the most discussed groups to come along in the last ten years. Maybe they've fallen out of favor in these pages, but fuck it. This is one of the best songs I heard in the decade, which comprised the majority of my 20s. It's also a good summation of FUCKED UP's dual personality. The first half is three-chord punk perfection, while the second half was the first glimpse of their more experimental side with a couple minutes of jamming, and a horn section popping up. I've done a lot of bad (and a few good) stage dives to this song.

3. JUDGEMENT – "Just Be" CD/EP (H:G Fact – 2000 / Prank – 2009 LP)

JUDGEMENT is my favorite band to ever come from Japan. Every song they released is essentially great, and this release showed that even with another singer (their third) and with a bit of a change in sound (a little more overt melody, more rock 'n' roll), they're still basically the best. Every song on *Just Be* is a perfectly crafted and played anthem—Zigyaku proves yet again to be a formidable guitarist and songwriter. End of story, no questions.

4. SEX VID – "Tania" EP (Dom America – 2007)

SEX VID was everywhere for the last couple of years, but the first time I really knew they were going to be more than just the band with the ripping DEEP WOUND/ASPIRIN FEAST style 7" (*Drugging* – 2006) was when I heard their second EP *Tania*. Things were getting looser and heavier and still staying fast as fuck, and I like fast. I've really enjoyed every release SEX VID has done, but this one holds a special place for me, and I think it totally holds up as representative of the band.

5. DRY-ROT – "Permission" EP (Cold Vomit – 2006)

I got this record on tour in 2006. Someone gave it to me, and when I was going through my pile of records the day I got back I wasn't even really sure what it was. I put it on and played the A-side (the hardcore side) about six or seven times in

a row, which is rare for me these days (I absorb stuff pretty fast). Destructive, self-hating, psycho-core like all my favorites (UNITED MUTATION, VOID, the SCAM, etc.). Later I released a record by these boys and they've become good friends, but I still remember being utterly blown away by this one. It has some of my favorite DRY-ROT cuts like "Isolated," "Killed By the Government," and the title track. This one means a lot to me. In the end I just think they do this style better than most of the other bands trying, because they're willing to take chances those bands aren't.

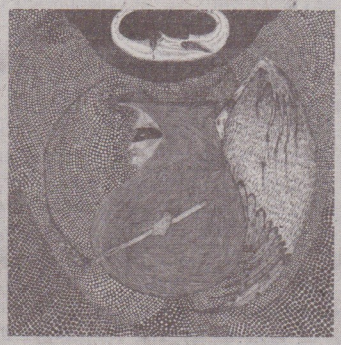
6. THINK I CARE – "Phase" EP (Deadalive – 2001)
Man, this thing still wrecks me all the time. I bought this and was just utterly chuffed at the INFEST/SS DECONTROL hybrid it hit me with. I got sweaty in basements, and bruised and cut with friends to these songs live. Heavy sheets of distortion and feedback on top of society hating grunts and mean as fuck riffs. I think this is one of the best records of its kind to come out anytime, and they were a straight edge band too (which is cool dummy). Endlessly inspiring.

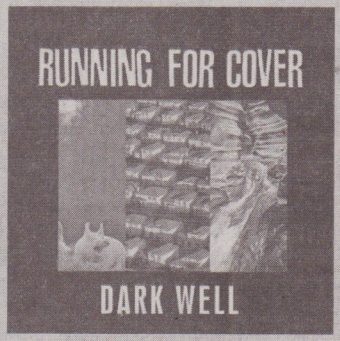
7. WASTE MANAGEMENT – "Get Your Mind Right" EP (Painkiller – 2007)
Maybe I shouldn't list a record that I recorded, but maybe I should because it's fuckin' sick. I offered to help record these guys when they were starting the band and before we had even finished the session I was already calling the other guys at Painkiller to insist we release it on vinyl. Every song is a perfect tribute to the Boston hardcore of ol' and I think it's the best of the crop of bands doing this style right now.

8. MENTAL – "And You Know This" EP (Lockin' Out – 2002)
When MENTAL started out I thought they were the best thing to happen for straight edge hardcore in quite a while. After all the over-serious posturing, splattered fonts, and "epic songs" that plagued straight edge this decade, it was good to have a band that kept things simple, loved old NYHC demos, and was awesome live. *And You Know This* is a great snapshot of MENTAL at their fastest and simplest, existing somewhere between STRAIGHT AHEAD, KRAKDOWN, and the first SICK OF IT ALL EP.

9. HATRED SURGE – "Horrible Mess" EP (625 – 2005)
I may regret not putting *Deconstruct* on my top LPs list (it's a seriously great album but it's too new for me to accurately evaluate), but I know at least this is where the madness started. A real powerhouse of a grindcore EP with all the ingredients I like (TERRORIZER/ASSUCK/DESPISE YOU), and heavy brutal production. It's always awesome when a band starts out great, and then manages to stay great. I've enjoyed every SURGE release and still spin this one a lot.

10. KNIFE FIGHT – "What Have You Done?" EP (My War – 2003)
This is one of the first really good '82 throwback records that came out in the 21st century. It reminds me a lot of the early VOORHEES stuff now, but also has plenty of influence from the great bands of the '80s (SOA, INFEST, STRAIGHT AHEAD, DYS). Just a perfectly great fast hardcore record top-to-bottom. Burly vocals, which is why I asked Jon to sing in a band with me a year ago.





RAMSEY KANAAN

The beauty of technology is that everything gets re-released. And for old(er) wankers such as myself, who believe that the late '70s/early '80s were the golden age of music, well, this is a good thing. There's been far too much wonderful stuff (re)released in the last decade (and some great records from old bands, and even the occasional new wondrous offering) to just list ten, so I'm going to regale with you the ten bestest *labels of the last decade:*

1. First, last, and always, we have the finest reissue label of them all, Captain Oi!. Their CDs always come fully loaded with all the relevant bonus tracks, B-sides, and whatnot, and their taste is impeccable. I was particularly excited to see the SKIDS finally getting the reissue treatment, along with DISCHARGE, the RUTS, UK SUBS, CHORDS, PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES, DESTRUCTORS, the list really goes on and on. Plus, of course, the greatest band of all time...the VAPORS. (www.captainoi.com)

2. An incredibly close second is the ought-to-be-first equal reissue label (also out of the UK) Overground. Similarly deluxe packages have resurrected the likes of the SYSTEM (my favorite of the Crass bands), NUCLEAR SOCKETTS, ICON AD, and the mandatory four CDs of the anarcho-punk era. (www.overground.co.uk)

3. Not only has Joey Shithead lovingly reissued all of the DOA back catalog on Sudden Death Records, but DOA is still putting out new records...and the last couple have been as good as anything they've done. Seriously. Long live the old bastards. Plus Sudden Death is home to some fantastic POINTED STICKS reissues (power-pop at its finest), the first couple of REAL MACKENZIES records and a whole lot more. (www.suddendeath.com)

4. What Sudden Death does for Canada, Nicky Garratt's New Red Archives does America proud. Immigrants do it best apparently, and NRA has the best of the UK SUBS repackaged, along with SOCIAL UNREST many other gems. (www.newredarchives.com)

5. Of course, there's more to Canada than just DOA. Insurgence Records have been keeping anti-fascist "street" music on the map, as well as anthologizing the decidedly left-of-center OPPRESSED and THE PRESS amongst other treasures. (www.insurgence.net)

6. Not to be outdone in terms of political (i.e. left) musical output, Rebel Time Records plies the politics with more pop and melody, with the likes of the fantastic CLASS WAR KIDS (LAWRENCE ARMS with PROPAGANDHI's lyrics), BROADCAST ZERO, and BRAT ATTACK. (www.rebeltimerecords.com)

7. I guess talking of labels that actually do (gasp) real stuff that isn't reissues, pride of place, needless to say, has to go to Red Scare. They've never done a release that has been less than stellar, and of course, introduced the FALCON (best new band of the decade, hands down) onto an undeserving world, along with TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET and a slew of other bloody brilliant masterpieces.

8. Same could be said, of course, of dear old Fat Wreck Chords. NOFX continues to prove why they are America's best band, with a brace of brilliant full lengths, which just get more political and better with age! Plus there's DEAD TO ME, LAWRENCE ARMS, DILLINGER FOUR, NO USE FOR A NAME, PROPAGANDHI... (www.fatwreck.com)

9. Better late than never, Alternative Tentacles finally got into the reissue game, with classics from THE SUBHUMANS (Canadian), AMEBIX, ARTICLES OF FAITH, Th'INBRED, FARTZ...and hey, BIAFRA's spoken word stuff is still worth lending an ear. (www.alternativetentacles.com)

10. Never heard of Apop records, but fuck me, if they didn't do a new (and completely superior) edition of the complete CRISIS discography. Completely mandatory. (www.apoprecords.com)

LAYLA GIBBON

*This has been a difficult list to compile! I was conflicted as to what the selection process should be. Should I pick records that I listened to on repeat, if now the aspect that made me so obsessed seems unrecognizable? Or the ones that stood the test of time? Or the ones I found out about after the fact? I spent the early part of the century living in NYC, then the OC and then London, going to see KLANG (a post-punk/YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS influenced band from London), LIFE WITHOUT BUILDINGS, SLUMBER PARTY, QUIX*O*TIC, WRANGLER BRUTES, HOT SNAKES—only a few of those are* MRR*-able, so this list is not exactly the historic time line of my experience in the '00s. There were bands that had songs that blew me away, but because the rest of their output was not so intoxicating they were not included (Ahem, KNUGEN FALLER)! There were a few records I was obsessed with for a second then forgot about, there were bands I over-listened to and probably don't need to hear again. I decided to pick records that I was consumed by, even if that's not still the case. Records that represent a particular point in time succinctly. Also I am sure I forgot something. I feel weird writing about a lot of this, since I spouted off about it all so much in the mag over the years already… The zeroes? Yeah it's a top thirteen—wotcha gonna do about it??*

Seven-inches! Long players! And a tape!

1. FRUMPIES – "We Don't Wanna Go Home" EP (Kill Rock Stars – 2000)
The FRUMPIES formed in the early '90s—Tobi, Billy, and Kathi of BIKINI KILL, and Molly from BRATMOBILE, and sometimes Michelle from the MAKE UP. They were one of my favorite bands then, and this, their last 7" exemplifies why. Nostalgic, hazy, sometimes frantic songs about hanging out with your friends, with both *Girls in the Garage* and SHOP ASSISTANTS undertones. This band makes me think of being a teenage girl skater, listening to BLACK FLAG and HUGGY BEAR, and having no money but having the best time anyway...

2. SEX VID – "Communal Living" (Dom America – 2008), "Tania" EP (Dom America – 2007), and "Drugging" (Kill Test – 2006)
SEX VID was my favorite band of the zeroes. You can order back issues of *MRR* and read all about it!

3. HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Edge" EP (P-Trash – 2008)
I love the HOMOSTUPIDS. I listened to this record the most so it got selected, despite the fact that it had a picture of that creep from U2 on the cover.

4. MIKA MIKO – "666" 12" (PPM – 2007) and "CYSLABF" LP (Kill Rock Stars – 2007)
MIKA MIKO should have inspired girls across America to grab RIKK AGNEW's solo record, that MIDDLE CLASS 7", and a KLEENEX 7" too, and start a new musical movement. MIKA MIKO was exciting, exuberant and fun, like a secret society of girls that made each other cool mix tapes and used code words… Kate Hall's drumming style was like a hardcore influenced Palmolive—totally unique and inventive—and Michelle is such a rad guitarist, true beach punk doom. RIP to a great band… There's still time for that musical movement! Do it ladies!

5. WRANGLER BRUTES – tape (self-released – 2003)
When I heard that Andy from MONORCHID/SKULL KONTROL, Brooks from BORN AGAINST/UOA, Cundo from FAST FORWARD and Sam McPheeters from BORN AGAINST were playing music together I was so psyched… This tape cemented that excitement. This band was written off by some for being hardcore for people that don't listen to hardcore anymore. There's some truth to that probably, but I love the guitar playing, and Brooks is one of the greatest drummers... This was their first and best release. Funny and fuck-you-all at once.

6. GORILLA ANGREB – "Jeg Gar Ikke I Sort" LP (Hjenespind – 2007)
This is a full on cheat, as this discography LP means that I do not have to decide between the many GORILLA ANGREB records that have cluttered my turntable. Listening to their music all in a row makes it clear what a great band they were, from the frantic vengeance screams of their split with LOKUM to the focused totalness of their 12", and perhaps their catchiest song, "De Kommer Ud Om Natten" from the *Astma* 7". Mai's voice is so tough and dreamy at once, and I loved every one of their records. The male/female vocals were the LOST KIDS and X collision of this punk girl's dreams…

7. TYRADES – LP (Broken – 2003)
It's one of the great tragedies of modern life that Jenna isn't in a band anymore. TYRADES was vicious cut-your-eyeballs-out garage for true punks. Not the wimpy term-bro ice cream commercial sounds that girls and boys with Marianne Faithful bangs who like embroidering deer now get down to—this is shit for true miscreants. Violent, savage, and catchier than an STD—a bottle in the face to all the tired beach ball sounds of now.

8. NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Das Reich / Secret Police" (Backwards Masking – 2003)
"Secret Police" is one of the greatest, most classic punk songs of the past ten (twenty? thirty?) years. As I said, there were a lot of records that I over-listened to, to the point where if I ever hear 'em again I will expire. This was over-listened to, but I can still take a few thousand more times of it I think…

9. DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida es un Mus – 2009) and INVASIÓN – "La Caza" 12" (La Vida es un Mus – 2008)
I don't even know how to write about these bands and these people. Truly invigorating—the sound of fuck you, of making your own band and idea and scene from scraps and shards.

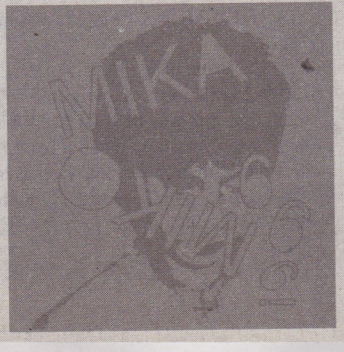
10. LIMP WRIST – "To the Grave" 12" (self-released – 2008)
I think this is my favorite thing LIMP WRIST has released; it's just so raging—the guitar sound, the riffs! Chanel's backing vocals vs. Martin is a total frantic explosion… We got these before they went off to Japan, and this record will always remind me of when I was distribution coordinator here at the mag, having to figure out how to run this shit without having Martin a phone call away. Question?

11. FUCKED UP – "Generation" 12" (Slasher – 2005)
I wasn't going to put this, because this band is so pompous and boring now. They have in fact reached prog-rock-being-played-by-a-symphony levels of pomposity and irrelevance. But this, along with the *Searching for Gold* 12" and the *Police* 7" definitely soundtracked my decade somewhat. The riff is so great—it seems like a comment on the ultimate dumb hardcore riff, while encapsulating it at the same time.

12. OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP (Vinyl Warning – 2004)
This is an example of a record that I over-listened to, to the point where I don't need to hear it ever again. I was gonna put one of their equally worthy 7"s, but I listened to this record so much, on headphones walkin' round rain-soaked SF, lost in thought. Introspective, thoughtful, and catchy. A true successor to the Northwest tradition of doom-soaked punk and hardcore.

13. LEBENDEN TOTEN – live and LOOK BACK AND LAUGH – live
Man, seeing LBAL play made me glad that I am a punk. True life affirmation, when you feel part of something that's worth being part of. I don't think their records quite got across the visceral experience of seeing them play, but they were one of my favorite bands when they were around. LEBENDEN TOTEN flew under my radar until I saw them play and was totally blown away. One of the best punk shows I have ever seen in a falling apart basement, probably the first (and maybe the last) time I have been in a pit since I was a teenager.

I also listened to INFEST, DOUBLE NEGATIVE, CARBONAS, ANGRY ANGLES, CONDOMINIUM, CULT RITUAL, MENTALLY CHALLENGED, COLD SWEAT, PELIGRO SOCIAL, CRIMINAL DAMAGE, HARD SKIN, FINALLY PUNK, XYX, BRILLIANT COLORS… and all those other bands I forgot to include…



BRIAN DOOLEY

Well, well, here I sit at the eleventh hour racking my brain to come up with a top ten list for the last decade. Do you have any idea how hard it is to choose even a year-end top ten? With my ever-growing record collection sitting at my side, it is unfathomably difficult to think/look back over the last ten years worth of records, and to remember what I was digging when I was a wee lad of eighteen and beyond. It's such a different lot of bands compared to what I have been listening to over the last five years. There are a couple obvious choices, and several not so obvious, but when thoroughly contemplated, the following win out over the rest.

SEXY – "Por Vida" LP (Onion Flavored – 2003)
When I learned I had to do a decade top ten, this was the first and, if I remember correctly, only record that popped into my mind as a shoe-in. I remember buying *Por Vida* based solely on the description on the card at Extreme Noise: "Lo-fi pop punk in the Bay Area tradition." To the best of my knowledge, that was all it said, all it needed to say, and was spot-on. From beginning to end (well, almost—the last live track coulda been left off…) this LP fucking rules! Twelve songs of pure genius in all aspects, from the simple musical composition, entirely accessible lyrics, and rad artwork, all the way down to the screen printed inside-out used LP sleeve, this record is perfect. Apparently when *Por Vida* originally came out, there were all sorts of complications with the mastering/pressing that unfortunately made many of the originals un-listenable. Not long ago, a small handful was found at a little-known distro here in SF, and as you'd expect, they were snatched-up *quick*. If you didn't get this on vinyl the first time around, you're in luck, as Thrillhouse Records just re-pressed a ton for anyone who has been searching far and wide for this gem.

THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB – "Three Way Tie for a Fifth" LP (Plan-It-X South – 2004)
I didn't really think much of *Three Way Tie for a Fifth* the first several times I heard it. My roommate had a burnt CD of it and listened to it nearly constantly. It didn't take long for it to grow on me. I remember going from "Hmm, I wanna hear that record again" to "Fuck, this record rules, I'mma keep it on my turntable 'til it won't play anymore." It was through THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB that I got turned on to the Plan-it-X sound and folk punk in general. After listening to THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB religiously, an out-of-town friend left a message on our answering machine telling us they were playing in our town soon. It turned out they were playing the next day, and I had to work. I got someone to cover my shift at work and went to the show. That show was all it took for me to get hooked on almost every band that played, and I can now honestly say that *Three Way Tie for a Fifth* helped make me who I am today.

MARKED MEN – "Fix My Brain" LP (Swami – 2006)
Fix My Brain was what, MARKED MEN's third LP? I don't know what took me so long to listen to them, but this was the first MARKED MEN record that I heard. Usually when a band is this good, you hear about them pretty early on. Sure, I knew about and owned a couple records by their previous band, the REDS, but the MARKED MEN are different. The REDS had more of a stripped-down simple sound, more rock than pop. MARKED MEN brings the catchier, poppier sound to the forefront of their sound. Out of their four full-lengths, *Fix My Brain* is the one that really stands out to me as being definitive about what is good about this band. It's tough though, 'cuz as I go back and listen to the two previous records they all stand out as being completely fucking awesome. I guess this spot in my top ten will have to serve more as a top ten band rather than individual record.

OFF WITH THEIR HEADS – "Hospitals" 12" (Rock Bottom – 2006)
OFF WITH THEIR HEADS was around for a while before I ever considered buying one of their records. Having seen them a few times, I deemed them horrible. I would show up late to a show just so I wouldn't have to watch them. I was dumbfounded when people were starting to talk about how good they were. "Really? OFF WITH THEIR HEADS? Huh? Is there another band with the same name?" Eventually I ended-up going to a show they were playing early enough to catch them and was totally caught off guard. I don't know what happened, but they went from being unlistenable to being the best band in town. This 12" will forever be one of my top ten favorite pop punk albums—from beginning to end, it rules. People will always compare Minneapolis to DILLINGER FOUR, but I never really got that with these guys. They have a sound that, while definitely poppy, is unique.

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS – "Wake Up, Music" LP (625 – 2006)
Wake Up, Music is JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS complete discography, compiling their demo tape, two EPs, a few comp tracks, split with EXCLAIM, a live set, and one unreleased studio session. If you are into Japanese hardcore (even if you're not) and are still unfamiliar with these maniacs, you need to track down *Wake Up, Music*. I'm not sure how hard the original releases are to find these days, so this is probably your best bet. JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS takes Japanese hardcore and mix it with rock 'n' roll to produce a totally spastic sound unlike any other Japanese hardcore band. No growly vocals, no heavy guitars or fuzzy bass, yet still fast and spastic.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
It's been said before, and I'll go ahead and say it again…BLITZ worship at its best. What more do you need from a description? CRIMINAL DAMAGE is made up of members of TRAGEDY/HIS HERO IS GONE, but sounds nothing like their previous projects. Every song on this record is super catchy and kicks total ass. I remember hearing them at a friend's house, but never buying the record. Eventually they had a show at this tiny bar down the street from my house and I decided to check it out. It was probably the most packed I have ever seen this place. It was super hot and sweaty, yet entirely awesome in every aspect. Now that I know a bunch of their songs, I'm kicking myself for not getting with it earlier. Oh well, I'll just have to wait until next time.

ANNIHILATION TIME – "II" LP (Six Weeks – 2005 LP)
I wasn't really sure if I wanted to put this one in here, but after a quick refresher listen, I decided to go with it. Before I had heard ANNIHILATION TIME, someone told me they were like a perfect cross of BLACK FLAG and BLACK SABBATH. I can totally agree with that, but I think I'd throw THIN LIZZY into the mix. It's like hardcore with hints of metal and '70s guitar rock without actually crossing over. While I'd say their first LP isn't *bad*, it just doesn't compare with *II*. The newer vocalist made things more listenable, plus the songwriting seems like they collectively made a decision to step it up and seriously kick ass for this record. I'd recommend *II* over anything else they have done.

CRYBABY MACARTHUR – "BPF" EP (self-released – 2005)
To the best of my knowledge, aside from an impossible to find demo tape, this is the only record CRYBABY MACARTHUR ever did. I picked this up on a whim after reading a review and have listened to it at least once a week, if not daily, since it came out. There are six songs here, two of which are some of my favorite songs that I can remember in recent times. "Born to Stumble" and "The Chase" stand out so boldly to me that there is no way I could leave this record out of my top ten. Everything about those two songs make it—the lyrics, the music, and the vocals all seem so perfect to me. The rest of the songs are pretty damn good, but those two are just so good that it wouldn't matter if this was a two-song EP, it would still be in my top ten.

TRAGEDY – LP (Tragedy – 2000)
This record will always stand out to me. I got to see these guys live a week or so before this record was available at the local record store. I had always liked HIS HERO IS GONE, so I was pretty stoked to find out they had a new band. I don't even remember hearing much hype about this record, maybe because I was living under a rock or just not paying enough attention. I can honestly say that this record not only lived-up to any hype surrounding it, but completely surpassed it. I really like how TRAGEDY took a more melodic approach to their songwriting, but were able to keep it nice and heavy at the same time. This record spawned a bunch of clones, but none will ever live up to what TRAGEDY is capable of.

SCREAMING FEMALES – "What If Someone Is Watching Their TV?" LP (self-released – 2007)
I love this record so much I cheated and put in my top ten last year, even though it came out in 2007. There isn't any other band around with a sound so unique. SCREAMING FEMALES has two other albums, one previous and one more recent, but *What If Someone Is Watching Their TV?* really stands out to me as being the best. The other two records have a sort of jammy rock vibe, but this one is unmistakably harder and grungier. It's pretty hard to describe, and I won't go into my whole rant of how I think this sounds like old video game music (although I do stand by that argument), but everything about this works perfectly. The guitar tone, the bass, the drumming, the weird tremolo in the vocals, and the occasional screaming outbursts all come together to make a unique sound that is nearly impossible to deny. If you have yet to hear SCREAMING FEMALES, do yourself a favor and check out this record.

FELIX HAVOC

It's hard to believe the '00s are already coming to a close. When MRR *asked for top ten lists my first reaction was to question whether ten good records had been made in this decade. But my retrograde attitude was quickly dismissed and I began to seriously dig into the last decade of vinyl to pick some standouts. The task proved to be more complicated than I thought, and now after a few months of listening, listing, and discussing I find it very hard to narrow the list down to ten records. In fact, I would say that the quality of hardcore punk has improved radically in the '00s over that in the '90s. That said, to me it still falls short of the '77-'84 period.*

For certain the '00s produced an avalanche of hardcore punk vinyl, and if you pile on CDs and MP3s it was probably the most productive decade in the history of punk. However, much of what was produced was derivative repetition or merely a third or fourth generation of something done long before. Some bands took a very well worn style and, with good songwriting and high energy, managed to create something on a level comparable to the old masters. Despite experimentation that has lead punk down many new and innovative avenues, every record I've picked falls into a sub-genre that already existed in the '90s, if not the '70s or '80s.

Some of the criteria I used for selecting these records are of course highly subjective. The right combination of talent, energy, and songwriting means that as much as we complain about "turd bands" there are some really great ones when you sift through the distro crates of a decade. When narrowing my list I picked records that upon first listen made me stop what I was doing and say to myself, "Now this is something." But more important than that is how memorable the songs are. That is to say, you only have to hear the best punk once to be able to remember the songs clearly and replay them in your head. If you can recall a song like this after only one listen, then you are listening to a really memorable record. This does skew things in favor of bands that are more melodic or focus on catchy hooks in their music, as opposed to bands that just blast with pure energy. This might be why I'm pretty burned on grindcore and tuneless thrash in favor of more mid-tempo arrangements. Also, there are many bands that put out solid records, but are really only best in their element live. Also, some bands have an album or more worth of great material, but their output is scattered all over splits, comps, singles, or numerous LPs without a definitive release. So I've made my top ten, and also added some runner ups.

LPs:

TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank – 2007)
Far and away the best record of the decade and the only one by a band that was already going in the '80s. This LP stands pretty far above all the rest of my picks. My fondness for TOTALITÄR has grown over the years, and *Vi Är Eliten* was strongly anticipated and did not disappoint. Around the house and at the record store it's the default I reach for when I can't think of anything else.

MARTYRDÖD – LP (Plague Bearer – 2003)
This LP has a totally unique sound and atmosphere, metallic *käng* that is dark and powerful.

TEAR IT UP – "Nothing to Nothing" LP (Deadalive – 2002)
This LP and the self-titled 7" are the best material from this prolific band, but all of their output is pretty good. TEAR IT UP was also in top form every time I saw them live, whether it was in front of 20 or 200 people. High-energy hardcore that mixed the '80s HC sound with youth crew and produced what we now call "Y2K thrash."

TRAGEDY – "Vengeance" LP (Tragedy – 2002)
Most people would pick the first LP, but I think *Vengeance* really captures the sound at its most focused. Melodic yet powerful hardcore that spawned legions of imitations, most of which didn't even make it out of the gate.

OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP (Vinyl Warning – 2004)
I normally don't listen to melodic or poppy punk, but this record totally took me from left field. Just great catchy and melodic punk with memorable songs, and good vocals and lyrics.

DS-13 – "Vad Vet Vi Om Kriget?" LP (Deranged – 2000)
DS-13 was a big part of my life in the early '00s—touring, pressing, and distributing records and hanging out with friends. While a lot of people are "over" the hardcore scene of the early '00s, I will never forget the good times and great records from that era. Especially DS-13, TEAR IT UP, and 9 SHOCKS TERROR.

FROM ASHES RISE / VICTIMS – split LP (Havoc – 2003)
I could have picked FROM ASHES RISE's *Silence* LP or VICTIMS' *Neverendinglasting*, but this split is some of the very best material by both bands and the very rare example of a really great split LP. FROM ASHES RISE's dark crust took the influences of Swedish hardcore and combined it with more melodic punk and death metal to help create the "Tennessee Sound." VICTIMS was among the best of many great bands to come out of Sweden in the '00s. I like the material from this era the best when the D-beat influence was a little stronger.

9 SHOCKS TERROR – "Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass" LP (Havoc – 2001 re-mastered reissue)
Another band I spent a lot of time on tour with, and working with. *Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass* captures the best of the Cleveland-meets-Japan style of hardcore—raw abrasive dangerous hardcore—and it is to my mind the best release from a very prolific scene.

YOUNG WASTENERS – "We Got Ways" 12" (Kick N' Punch – 2002)
Here's another record that really stands out for its catchy and memorable songs, retro to the point of being tongue in cheek (I hate cops, to the max!), but done with such verve and panache that it still hits the mark every time.

GOVERNMENT WARNING – "No Moderation" LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
Great straight ahead hardcore that is memorable and exciting. A lot of people criticized the bands coming out of Richmond for being too retro, or too focused on the '80s, but for me the '80s were the golden age of hardcore, and there's nothing wrong with playing in an "old" style if you do it with energy and have songs that can measure up. GOVERNMENT WARNING is a great live band as well, and again, the best document from a prolific and exciting scene.

Runner-ups:
SKITKIDS – "Onna For Pleasure" 12" – Bombastic Swedish/Japanese hardcore. All their material is great, but this LP is probably my favorite, and live this band is just on fire.
WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "Sucking of the Missile Cock" LP – Live and on record another powerful band. To my mind this remains their best work.
VICIOUS – "Alienated" LP – Another catchy and melodic punk record with great vocals.
FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" – Crushing Swedish/Japanese hardcore.
DEATHREAT – "Consider It War" 12" – This record came and went so fast that I think it failed to make the impact it deserved.
PISSCHRIST, WARCRY, DODSDOMD, AFTER THE BOMBS, WOLFBRIGADE, WARVICTIMS, HELLSHOCK, MEANWHILE – All of these bands are top shelf, but I feel like they either need to be seen live to be appreciated, or they have many great songs, but lack a truly definitive record.

EPs:

AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ – "De Hjernedodes Nat" EP (Kick N' Punch – 2000) and "Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud På Film" EP (Havoc – 2002)
Probably the best punk 7"s released in the '00s. This Copenhagen band set the clock back to Dischord circa 1981 and just blew away everything that was going on at the time.

CAREER SUICIDE – "Fall Out" EP (Kangaroo – 2003)
I like all of CAREER SUICIDE's material, but this 7" is by far my favorite. Later released as a 12", these songs are just great, snotty, raw hardcore punk.

REGULATIONS – "Destroy" EP (Busted Heads – 2004) and "Survive in the City" EP (Putrid Filth Conspiracy – 2003)
Another Scandinavian band that turned back the clock to the early days of hardcore and created some great catchy hardcore punk songs.

NO PARADE – "Nightsticks and Justice" EP (Partners In Crime – 2001)
Another killer from Tennessee—punishing hardcore punk with great lyrics, heavy and powerful.

TRAGEDY – "Can We Call This Life?" EP (Tragedy – 2002)
This band doesn't need much more written about them, but this 7" was a real stand out.

DISCLOSE – "Mass of Raw Sound Assault" EP (MCR – 2001)
I think DISCLOSE's best LP was in the '90s but this 7" is really crushing, raw D-Beat at its best.

FUCKED UP – "Police" EP (Deranged – 2003)
Fucked Up's early 7"s set a standard for outstanding catchy and memorable punk songs. I have not been into the direction the band progressed, but the first four 7"s, and especially this one, are truly memorable. Simple and direct punk stripped down

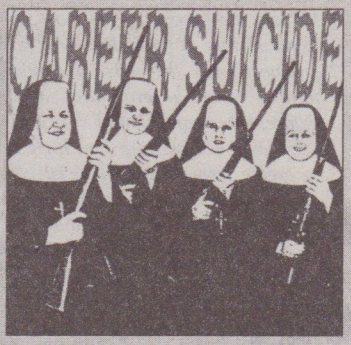
to its essential elements.

KAKKA HÄTÄ 77 – "WTC Räjähtää" EP (Combat Rock –2007) and "Kakahätä Tappaa" EP (Dead Forever – 2007)
This Finnish band delivers great obnoxious punk that is a mix of late-'70s Finnish and UK styles. These two 7"s were later collected as an LP. Most excellent and frequently over looked.

KIELTOLAKI – "Maailma Menee Helvettiin" EP (Moo Cow – 2006) and "Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen" EP (Moo Cow / Combat Rock – 2007)
While a lot of Finnish bands in the '00s were playing the same kind of hardcore punk as the rest of the world, KIELTOLAKI went back to the roots and plays the early-'80s Finnish style with perfection.

KVOTERINGEN – "Roffarens Marknad" EP (Terrötten – 2005) and "Vidrig Maskinell Framfart" EP (Terrötten – 2006)
Blistering Swedish raw punk. A project band that is better than most "serious" bands.

Runner-ups:
GATECRASHERS – "Loud At Any Volume" EP – One of my favorites from the early '00s. Just fast raw hardcore.
SHARK ATTACK – "Blood in the Water" EP– Another killer from the early '00s. Maybe leans a little too hard into straightedge or jock-core territory for some people, but I think it's great.
DOWN IN FLAMES – "Start the Fucking Fire" EP – Excellent fast and energetic hardcore from some young guys who just shred it on this EP.
TEAR IT UP– "I Feel Better Already" EP – I wrote about their LP above, but this first 7" has some truly great songs.
CAUSTIC CHRIST – "No Love" EP – I love this one; heavy and raw mix of crust and '80s hardcore.
DSB – This band did several 7"s in the '00s, all of which are good rampaging and bombastic Japanese hardcore.
TRISTESS – "Bara Rock N Roll" EP – To my mind the best release from this outfit. Retro '78-style Swedish punk that is fun and obnoxious.
NO TIME LEFT – "Zero Effort Solution" EP – One of the best straightedge bands of the '00s. Their 7" and 10" have some furious hardcore and good lyrics.



CHUCK BARRELS

The best punk records of the decade? What a challenging thing to think about. The lines between genres have been so blurred by now that you can pretty much call anything punk at this point. And what defines punk nowadays anyway? That's like asking for a definition of God. Punk means something different to everyone. Each of us has our own parameters as to what we consider the tenets of true punk rock in this day and age. Being angry and spiking your hair and singing with a sneer means nothing anymore. Neither does shaving your head and getting some tats and moshing it up with your bros. You can see that shit at the mall any day. Punk has been co-opted by the norms; we all know that. But we also know that real punk is still out there, hiding in the basements and dives and garages. It's now all a question of what each of us looking for. If you don't know me, I come from what most MRR *readers would call the "garage" scene. Just as I think most of you come from the "hardcore" scene. At times in the past, both of these little sub-genres were the apex of punk. And now they exist fairly independently, and are really genres of their own aside from the actual ideal of punk itself that gave birth to them. I could make additional lists of the ten best hardcore-punk records of the decade and the ten best garage-punk records, and there would be no overlap between them and this list. What this list here boils down to is the ten records I felt best embodied the punk spirit, in its purest essence. Records that didn't need a "-punk" ending to describe them. Sure, there might have been better hardcore records or garage records, but I think these were the ten records that filled my own personal criteria for punk rock, sans genre baggage. 7"s only, as they are the truest punk format. I apologize ahead of time for the record I'm sure that I'm forgetting and any chronological errors. This list is in order.*

10. FEELERS – "Fuhrer's New Miniskirt" EP (Death By Noise – 2004)
A low-fidelity blast of nowheresville Midwestern punk from Columbus, home of the dreaded shitgaze scene, a movement that I think crushed their spirit. Ragged vocals, trebly thin recording, dual guitar squeal, claustrophobic/paranoiac vibes from a deceptively talented band. Exceptional three-song salvo of dark punk from one of the better live acts of the decade as well. The fact that most people didn't even care is further testament to their greatness, and probably insures someone will "discover" this record again in fifteen years and wonder why.

9. TYRADES – "I Am Homicide" EP (Shit Sandwich – 2004)
The TYRADES were the perfect sum of their parts—a great record collection, a token chick singer, a shitload of energy. They had an agenda and executed it well. Live, they were non-stop action, and I think this record is the best representation of that. Danger-punk, action-punk, whatever you wanted to call it, they managed to make definitively punk singles with a bit of angle to them. Buzzsaw guitars, moronic backing vox, short sharp shocks. The title cut is one of the better anthems to violence of recent vintage, "Can't Stand It" cuts like a razor, and to close they cleverly take a BILLY CHILDISH number and turn it into such jagged modern punk it's almost unrecognizable. A true singles band, and that's some punk shit.

8. CATHOLIC BOYS – "Brainwash City" EP (Kryptonite Records – 2003)
Hyperactive teenage mayhem from Milwaukee, neatly encapsulating all the punk of the Rip Off Records sound without the garage, and pretty much slamming the door shut on that chapter of punk rock history. The heirs to throne the LAST SONS OF KRYPTON left vacant. Hot dual guitar action, dexterous and aggressive drumming, snot-caked vox, shittily fantastic production. For a little bit there back in the day, these kids were the punkest thing going, reminding a lot of us that when it comes to punk-ola, the unjaded youth of the day will always reign supreme. Sometimes it's a shame that these kids have to grow up. Way better than their LP or anything that came after.

7. ROT SHIT – "Have You Scene…Rot Shit?" EP (Fashionable Idiots – 2008)
Every era of punk needs their own ANGRY SAMOANS, the bunch of hooligans who will throw tomatoes at the establishment with guitars in their hands and shit-eating smirks on their faces. Whether you're calling out Rodney Bingenheimer or Jay Reatard, power pop or weird punk, there's a common lineage that is welcome and needed. Pittsburgh jagbags from other far less notable acts, these kids brought the hate and got hated on just as equally, but never shied away from talking shit on a scene that always deserved it. Record nerds, "mysterious guy" bands, message boards, anyone who took themselves too seriously got both barrels in a sloppy and rude punk style. And as much as one might think ROT SHIT is a "joke" record/band, well the joke's on us. Punk in every sense of the word.

6. CPC GANGBANGS – "Teenage Crimewave" EP (Die Slaughterhaus – 2006)
"Teenage Crimewave" is perhaps the apex of drug-fueled heavy *punque rocke moderne*. Savage vocals, anthemic shouted chorus, deft drum smash, a bass line that could carry an elephant, all crammed into one shit-fi platter. The death-trip vibe of the flipside and satanic vocals provide proof that there is more than one way to kick a fucking door down. I've seen more than a few bands go for the meth-fueled

biker vibe, and this record is the only time I've heard it pulled off properly. Obviously the band self-destructed while on tour later on, because there's no way a bunch of people who could make a record like this could stay together for long. "God says fuck you."

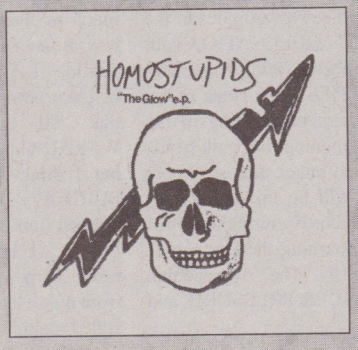
5. SHOOT IT UP – "Train Tracks" EP (Proud To Be Idiot – 2005)
Upon initially hearing this record I was pretty impressed by some of the sloppiest semi-inept punk blasts I had heard in some time. I figured SHOOT IT UP had a good gimmick going, i.e. the whole "we're so fucked up we can barely play" thing. Then after seeing them in person and realizing it was no gimmick I was doubly impressed. If punk means being total degenerate kids who could give a fuck about anything except doing more drugs, well here ya go Shirley. Their frontman comes off like a devolved Chavo and the drums sound like they just threw the kit down the stairs while a five-foot-tall kid with bad hair blazes hot fukkin lixx. This record also proved that California hasn't gone completely soft and can still produce a great punk band here and there.

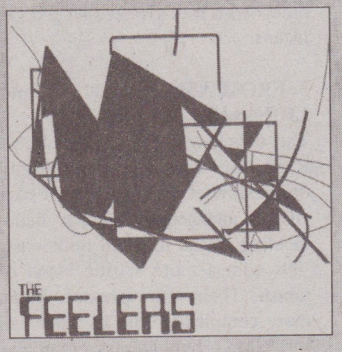
4. OUT WITH A BANG – "I'm Against It" EP (Vida Loca – 2005 12"/ Fashionable Idiots – 2007 7")
So punk it had to be released on both 12" and 7" formats. Eight furious blasts of Italian retardation about knives, cocks, blow, and other objects of recreation. Defying their obvious mental ineptitude, the musicianship is actually somewhat competent and the fact that the frontman of this outfit took enough time out from using his face as something other than a punching bag/drug receptacle to yell some lyrics still astounds me, as does the point that their other two singles are almost equally as great. That one of the finest punk outings of the '00s comes from Italy is surely a signal that these are end times indeed.

3. THE SPITS – "19 Million AC" EP (Dirtnap – 2001)
No discussion of the past decade in punk can be taken seriously if the SPITS aren't mentioned at some point. They've never made a bad record. Their debut single is certainly harder to find and of similar quality, but I think they totally nail this one down. "Shitty World" and its inhuman bass fuzz, ridiculously accented lyrics, cheesy synth line, and nonchalant swipe of a fairly unknown vintage punk tune might be the single most incredible moment of the decade. The fact that it is backed up by two more originals (the title cut being one of their all-time best. and an outright owning of an AFRIKA KORPS' cover rockets this one to the top of the shit heap. Excellence such as this does not come around very often.

2. MC MONKEY AND APE WITH ATTITUDE – "Human Zoo" EP (Kryptonite – 2004)
Modern bands will forever attempt to emulate the sounds of KBD-era one-hit wonders and the sometimes bafflingly incredible ineptitude that lonesome punks of that age would create operating in backwoods vacuums where no one really knew what punk was yet, so they just made up whatever they thought it should be. And unfailingly, the modern bands going that route always come up short. Except for this one shining moment, nearly TAMPAX-ian in its no-fi brilliance. The authentic sounds of two alcoholics locked in a Manitowoc house with a tape deck, one organ riff, some guitars, a cowbell, half a drum kit, a toy ray gun and nothing better to do. This isn't two hipsters attempting to make the next "UFO Dictator;" it's two social misfits actually doing it. One sprawlingly repetitive epic spread over two sides, dedicated to all their friends: "YOU PEOPLE ARE BEAUTIFUL! AIIIIIGHHHH!" This is the record that nerds in the year 2021 will be having their minds blown by.

1. HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Glow" EP (My Mind's Eye – 2006)
Like a blast of refreshing air this platter came wafting out of the armpit that is Cleveland and introduced the world to America's greatest current punk rock music band. I don't think much can be said about this one. Rough, raw, ridiculous, retarded, and other words starting with "R" come to mind. Everyone should own multiples. The perfect fusion of various subgenres (hardcore, garage-punk, noise-rock) into a punk rock shitstorm that's far purer than any of its parts. The high water mark of the decade as far as this jerk is concerned, and HOMOSTUPIDS is the band that will hopefully carry the corpse of punk into the next decade and hand it off some other suckers. Best band. The end.





KEN SANDERSON

With an attempt to codify what was best within a certain time period, as especially one as long as a decade, there's the inherent problem of current bands losing your interest over time and releases—dimming the lights on their earlier more brilliant releases. A lot of the music that breaks new ground at the time of its release often leads to more interesting, better defined music and ideas over time that can make scanning a hastily thrown together list somewhat cringe-worthy when viewed in retrospect. It's really hard, because what was best out of a time period is continually fluid, dependent on where music and your interests ebbs and flows from that point. Bands with stellar records can start batting complete dud after dud and ruin their former esteem, or forgotten bands' ideas can be rediscovered, renewed, and revived in a way that makes the band more popular than when they were active.

I had a hard time with a lot of the really genre-defining releases in the main type of music I listen to at home and focus on in my reviewing at MRR *(hardcore). This decade really stood in the shadows of an increasingly looming specter of a classic past—often half the time it seemed like the records people were most excited about this decade were all from the 1980s, records that were dusted off and finally available on a level of distribution that made them accessible on a mass level, be it on the internet, second hand on eBay, or through an increasing flood of reissues and bootlegs. I love all that stuff, but was lucky to hear a lot of it as it evolved and was released and saw an evolution that I always felt should continue, not u-turn back upon itself.*

If you look at early MRR*s, the top records for a given year would maybe warrant a small square on the cover, with just a tiny typed out list crammed in the corner. There was more history happening, less historical precedent to feel the need to review. I got into an argument once with Tim Yo that there was* way more *music being released in the '90s than the '80s; he disagreed. But at that point of the tiny typed out list,* MRR *was a bi-monthly endeavor with a way larger print type than the reviews of then or now, and the floodgates of '90s DIY had just swung open...to release the deluge point scenario we have now of endless releases. I think there became more of a desire for these lists, because of FOMO (fear of missing out)—faced with the impossible task of people processing through all the sheer insane volume of records coming out, heightened by the fact that most vinyl pressings shrunk greatly in size this decade. Anyway, in no order, here's my stab at the small corner of punk I know best.*

1. I never feel fair listing all the releases I was able to release this decade on my label Prank, but honestly they're the records I am closest to, spend more time with, and love the most. It was a difficult decade for me personally, but the label did a lot of exceptional records I'm really proud of: IRON LUNG – "Sexless/No Sex" LP. GUYANA PUNCH LINE – "Irritainment" LP, KYLESA – LP, SIGNAL LOST – "Prosthetic Screams" LP, GAUZE – 5th LP, TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP, CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP and "Neurotic Organization" EP, BORN/DEAD – "Our Darkest Fears Now Haunt

Us" 12" and "Final Collapse" LP, AVSKUM – "Uppror Underifrån" LP, WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "Graveyard Of Utopia" LP, SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS – "Svensk Mangel" EP and "Kängnäve" LP, ARTIMUS PYLE – "Civil Dead" LP and "Fucked From Birth" LP, all four PAINTBOX LPs on vinyl, and many others.

2. PESD – "Politikarepoizonekurvae" CD/LP (Trujaca Fala CD / Prank LP – 2006)
But I'm breaking my rule off the bat. *Politikarepoizonekurvae* was my favorite record released this decade, and it was originally issued on the excellent Trujaca Fala label from Poland. I had to review this on CD for *MRR*, loved it so much I pressed it on vinyl here in the States—the first Polish hardcore LP to be released here I think since DEZERTER's *Underground Out of Poland*. Maybe it's just dusting off '90s hardcore-industrial experimentation, but this decade was so consumed with the past that PESD seemed like a complete breath of fresh air with its combination of catchy Polish hardcore and cold wave experimentation to collide with KILLING JOKE/ MINISTRY style industrial hardcore. It's such a brutal record, such an atmospheric, moody journey. With such well written, well thought out songs, it's kind of incredible it's made by two people, and it takes a couple of listens in the chaos before you realize they were using a drum machine. Runner Up: APATIA – "Uleglosc" CD (2007) – This political, mid-tempo hardcore band has been around almost twenty years, and on first listen it's somewhat flat and maybe even bland with its monotonous vocals and tempo, but the mood that generates—there's just something that really builds with it that's necessitated many, many repeat listens.

3. FROM ASHES RISE – "Concrete and Steel" LP (Feral Ward – 2000)
The definitive LP by Nashville's FROM ASHES RISE, who with this release firmly stepped out of the shadow of their big brother band HIS HERO IS GONE, and began to define themselves with their melding of the low-end Southern crust of the late '90s with a more caustic blend of throttling, fast thrash. Their later releases might have garnered more complexity (the first track on the split with VICTIMS—holy cow!) or more melody (the mixed results of *Nightmares*), but the taut, tense, and urgent thrashing here is classic. Ties with: TRAGEDY – "Vengeance" LP (Tragedy – 2002) With their second LP, the diverse influences of upbeat, metallic Japanese hardcore (BASTARD) and moody European hardcore became completely melded into the southern crust low-end experimentation of HIS HERO IS GONE. Personally being so closely involved with HIS HERO IS GONE, I've always preferred HHIG. There was a manic intensity and unpredictability that was shed in favor of melodic songwriting and controlled delivery—something that I think made TRAGEDY more accessible and also more popular, but it's no contest and both bands rule. While *Vengeance* has cool, punk lyrics, the timing of the records release...if it had only took a more direct aim at the Post-9/11, fucked up Bush administration, it would've locked down the zeitgeist of the time, given the political crust scene a sense of direction and an influence—as much as the musical influence of this record continues to permeate—and there wouldn't have been a need to make much more of a "top ten" list with it on it. Their follow up *Nerve Damage* (Tragedy – 2006) viewed in the context of the whole was equally strong.

4. SPAZM 151 – "Freedom" LP (Mind Control – 2001) and KEGCHARGE – "Sadistic War Glory" LP (Hardcore Holocaust – 2003)
There was this lame theory in the early '00s that "maybe there will be good hardcore now that Bush is president like there was under Reagan." Instead we just got two wars, unparalleled corporate greed, a near economic collapse, violations of the Geneva conventions, and crumbling civil liberties. The punk scene, in the US at least, seemed to grow increasingly apolitical and indifferent. Not sure why, maybe the excesses of people crying on stage during the '90s about people at the gig not wearing vegan shoes, or maybe the problems were too difficult to get a grasp around. With an administration that violated law after law with no repercussions, no prosecutions, and complete indifference to public opinion, what can you say? Well my personal favorite moment on vinyl that pretty much sums up the Bush Administration is "FUCK MILITARY BASTARDS!" from *Sadistic War Glory*. Yeah HC Texas James, that pretty much says it...unless you want to deal with those boring bands whose lyrics sound like they're reading out of a textbook. The KEGCHARGE LP is a fun one, but it's HC TX James's other release this decade that actually does enter the Valhalla of great records of the '00s. SPAZM 151's *Freedom* is an absolutely scathing dose of rambunctious, rampaging hardcore from start to finish. Exceptional energy, exceptional recording—pissed songs like "Mansellout" and "Whatever Happened" kind of compete with hardcore from any era. Ironically, the "most pissed off record about the Bush administration came out four months before he left office" award goes to the CAPITALIST CASUALTIES / HELLNATION split LP (Sound Pollution / Six Weeks – 2008). Especially the CAPITALIST CASUALTIES side, which is just scathing in its pissed condemnation. Long in the works, worth the wait, and stunning that both bands keep their energy, speed, and anger almost twenty years on. Sound Pollution will be missed as they continued to make great records throughout this decade: SAYYADINA – "Mourning the Unknown" CD, BRODY'S MILITIA – "The Appalachian 12-Gauge Massacre" LP, UNDER PRESSURE, and more. R.I.P.

4.5. FORWARD – "Burn Down the Corrupt Justice" LP (H:G Fact / Partners In Crime – 2004)
It's real unusual for a Japanese bands to make direct political statements, but the opening salvo of this LP, "Fuck Bush," pretty much summed up that everyone outside the US had enough of W's arrogance. A tough LP with throttling drums, charging rockin' riffs, and brutal vocals. FORWARD released several great records this decade—my favorite track being "What's the Meaning Love?" off of 2000s *Just Go Forward To Death* (H:G Fact). Ties with: Label of the decade, Japan's H:G FACT, especially in the last year where the output has been manic and torrential, but with a continued consistent level of high quality. There's been so many great records this decade on H:G Fact from BLOWBACK, ASSAULT, AGE, CRUDE, JABARA, PAINTBOX, JUDGEMENT, as well as many Japan-only and split releases by US and international bands. There are plenty of reasons to pop back a glass of champagne in Mr. Satoh's honor at New Years. His continued commitment to helping the Japanese scene, making overseas music and bands available to Japanese audiences, and bringing Japanese bands to the US = hero status!

4.75. DEATHREAT – "Severing of the Last Barred Window" LP (Partners In Crime – recorded in 1999 but released in 2000)
Ten years later and there's still no machine for spreading the mustard...At a point the "Memphis Mafia" was cranking out all the good records and the two LPs by DEATHREAT (this and 2002s *Consider It War*) were some of the most rampaging stripped-down hardcore without a hint of retro—just great tough fast hardcore with blunt, to the point lyrics. *Severing* is the speedy rager, *Consider It War*, the more bare-knuckled anthem assault. Runner up: After the dissolution of DEATHREAT, guitarist Stan relocated to New York and formed BALANCE OF TERROR with a bunch of new people—a cool pattern he's continued with SIGNAL LOST in Austin and now ARCTIC FLOWERS in Portland. BALANCE OF TERROR's – "A Better Tomorrow" LP (Paralogy – 2002) is a great LP of similar fast hardcore, but somehow the implied speed—the drummer can barely keep pace with the rushing guitars—makes it even more intense. It's like the whole thing will spin off into chaos at any moment as it churns at high velocity.

5. LIMP WRIST – "What's Up With the Kids" EP (Paralogy – 2001)
Great, catchy, short, fast to-the-point queer positive hardcore anthems and a vehicle for Martin to showboat in assless chaps—what's not to like? Bonus points for leaving you with six tracks to flip over and over from side to side—the mid-decade trend towards hardcore EPs with three or four one-minute songs missed the point of the '80s blasting they were emulating, where bands crammed in as much as they could express in twelve minutes or less. Runner up: CAREER SUICIDE – "Attempted Suicide" LP (Deranged – 2007) – There were a lot of great straight ahead hardcore bands this decade that did awesome records (GOVERNMENT WARNING, WASTED TIME, STRUNG UP, etc.), but I think *Attempted Suicide*, one of CAREER SUICIDE's best, got a little overshadowed by a flubbed limited release, faulty mastering... Like the first DEATHREAT LP, it's a total refinement to the razor sharp focus of their previous efforts, zipping from quick blast to quicker blast of CIRCLE JERKS styled melody-driven hardcore.

6. AGROTÓXICO – "Libertacao" LP (Dirty Faces – 2008)
Brazil cranked out some of the best hardcore of the decade—still lyrically relevant with exceptional delivery and astounding energy. Here, AGROTÓXICO perfected a modernization of classic tough as nails, straight up Brazilian hardcore with powerful anthems topped with pure gravel-raked vocals. A real landmark, mandatory LP that tweaks the basic formula in enough directions to come off completely fresh. Ironically, a lot of the countries with traditionally lo-fi recordings in the '80s (Eastern Bloc, South America) had some of the most professional sounding, clean, and well recorded records this decade. This is true with the record that ties here: I SHOT CYRUS / DISCARGA – split LP (Peculio – 2005) – the DISCARGA side is cool (their *Musica Pra Guerra* LP of 2008 might be stronger), but the I SHOT CYRUS side might be my favorite blast of super energetic hardcore of the entire decade—so amped, so crazy, so pick up the needle when it ends and listen to it again, so want to smash things when it's playing. Their other records are killer, but this side is truly another level.

MANDATORY.

7. INFEST – "No Man's Slave" LP (Deep Six – 2002)
Recorded in 1995 and released in 2002, this might be the ultimate *fuck you* to all those people moaning, "There was no good music in the '90s," because edging for the best record released this decade was something recorded in the middle of the previous decade. "Nazi Killer" might just be the greatest 25-seconds-or-less blast in hardcore ever. The SoCal power violence scene also produced one of the best reissues of the decade: CROSSED OUT – "1990-1993" LP (2000 – Slap-A-Ham). How a reissue should be done—original releases, plenty of info, and exclusive demo tracks—and now sadly out of print. CROSSED OUT is one of the bands I always point to as proof the '90s didn't suck—how many bands played sixteen shows and spawned their own genre this decade??? Hopefully time will tell. This release is might have actually been released at the tail end of 1999 though not reviewed in *MRR* until 2000. In case that disqualifies it, maybe the most crucial reissue goes to AMEBIX – "No Sanctuary: The Spiderleg Recordings" (Alternative Tentacles – 2008). Material that languished out of print or on shitty bootlegs for way too long for being such a crucial puzzle piece of the evolution of crust and hardcore. AMEBIX probably also did the most amazing reunion shows I saw this decade here in SF and Texas—exceptional delivery and sound, on point with and to the community it belonged. Great!

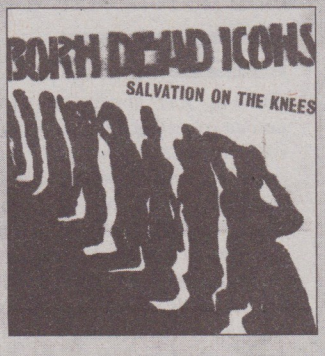
8. FUCKED UP – "Police" EP (Deranged – 2003)
Maybe just the *songs* "Police" (one of the decade's best), "Baiting the Public," and "Litany." One of the hardest working bands this decade—these three songs crystallized FUCKED UP and were seemingly the blueprint for other great records they'd do. When the band finally got around to making an album four years later (2006s *Hidden World*), it was enjoyable with excellent, classic rock WHO-styled moments folded into the tough, punk songwriting, but somewhat bloated compared to the terse economy and focus of their two-song EPs. From there a series of experimental throwaway records I rushed straight back to the buy counter at Amoeba, and well, I have no idea what this band sounds like now. But those early singles! Goddamn! Ties with: "If you start adding flute or making concept albums or whatever I'd just rather being listening to" EXTORTION – "Degenerate" LP (Deep Six – 2006) and "Sick" LP (Deep Six – 2008). No bullshit here, back to what I was saying about '90s powerviolence starting its own genre? Australian band cranks lethal doses of stop-start-stop-start brutality that seems to emanate out of Perth as much as SoCal—excellent thrash with the same kind of warped dark humor of the originators of the style. It's one thing when you have your tour t-shirt of a cartoon of someone stabbing with a knife and covered in blood, but when you up the ante like EXTORTION's US tour shirt by adding the baby pacifier flying up through the air with the blood... well...yeah.

8.5. PHOBIA – "Cruel" LP (Deep Six – 2006) and INSECT WARFARE – "World Extermination" LP (625 – 2007)
My two favorite grind records this decade. And I don't love grind unless—like a blood-splattered guy stabbing with a knife on a tour t-shirt—it takes it up to the next level. Both these records were so over the top in extreme intensity and manic speed that they've remained go-to records when I need a fix of this kind of complete musical deconstruction and pummeling savagery.

9. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Primary Colours" LP (Goner – 2008)
Sounds old, but also doesn't, feels old, but also doesn't. I think it's what a lot of bands tried to achieve this decade—rekindling the spirit of earlier punk ennui—but this is one of the few bands I think that managed to be successful in conveyance of that feeling while creating more than pale shadows of the past. Many repeat listens. Runner Up: BORN DEAD ICONS – "Salvation On the Knees" LP (Partners in Crime – 2001) None of this Montreal's bands three albums released this decade ever quite captured their live sound, and this was almost a "Back In the U.S.A" stripped down version of the band with little of their thunderous live shows. This did allow the songs to come into their own as one of their strongest efforts of a pack of good releases.

10. UNCURBED – "Keeps the Banner High" LP (Sound Pollution – 2000)
This Swedish band did other solid records this decade, but *Keep the Banner High* was a milestone of their rollicking, party punk, dual-vocalled insanity. Great crack-a-beer-and-blast-it LP. Recorded by Mieszko Talarczyk—who also mixed the Spasm 151 LP mentioned above—and the recording adds a lot to both of those releases; it's a great loss he passed away in the Asian Tsunami of 2004 (R.I.P.). Sweden had many great records this decade: MARTYRDOD's first LP (Plague Bearer – 2003)—a great blend of Swedish hardcore and death metal, KVOTERINGEN – "Roffarens Marknad" EP (Terrrötten –2005), SKITKIDS – "Onna For Pleasure" (Kick N' Punch – 2004), VICTIMS, DISFEAR, WOLFPACK, etc. Scandinavian bonus award goes to Finland's UNKIND – "Hangen Syliin" LP (Combat Rock Industry – 2007), which was a total blast of the post-TRAGEDY moody turn European crust, but with a charged intensity of delivery. The songs that start each side are up there with the best of anything released this decade.

10.5) Some of my favorite live shows this decade were by PELIGRO SOCIAL, DESTINO FINAL, F.U.K., GAUZE, EXTREME NOISE TERROR (stunned me too), PAINTBOX, BLOWBACK, ANNIHILIATION TIME, TOMORROW, MUNICIPAL WASTE, and one of the greatest might be August 2000 when NO JUSTICE played with WHAT HAPPENS NEXT! at 16th Street BART! Total chaos, random street people dealing drugs, and yelling, "Go Opie! Go!" as NO JUSTICE's singer flew airborne through the crowd. Insanity!



BRUCE ROEHRS

LPs:
1. ANTiSEEN – "The Boys from Brutalsville" LP (TKO – 2001)
Fuck! ANTiSEEN is far and away America's premier rock and roll band! The kings of destructo rock come at your face right away with "Guns A-Blazin'." Yes sir! This segues right into "Run My World." This is one of the strongest rock songs written in the last ten years. "Melting Pot" keeps a finger on the pulse of the nation, offering strong views on immigration—pushing the button on PC punks. Side two offers a great RAMONES cover and "(I'm A) Babyface Killer." Great!

2. THE TEMPLARS – "Horns of Hattin" LP (GMM – 2001)
This is skinhead rock taken to a majestic level! The TEMPLARS have songs that are a scathing indictment of society's ills. You get "Video Age," "Heroin Street," and one of the best songs "Shift the Blame," about taking responsibility for one's own life. We soar through skinhead masterpieces like "Enemies" and "Breakdown" to arrive at one of the best TEMPLARS songs ever written, "Ockham's Razor." Fucking brilliant!

3. THE WRETCHED ONES – "Less Is More" LP (TKO – 2003)
New Jersey's Oi! champions continue to pound out the hits! Older tunes like "America's Most Wanted," "Working Man," "Life for a Life," and "Don't Need No Love" link up to newer songs such as "You're Doing It Wrong," "I'm in a Rut," and "Skin

Neighbor." The WRETCHED ONES, along with NIBLICK HENBANE, THOSE UNKNOWN, and HEADWOUND changed the course of American skinhead rock.

4. LIMECELL – "Destroy the Underground" LP (Headache – 2000)
Philadelphia's favorite sons had a hell of a decade, spreading Confederacy of Scum destruction across the nation. Songs like "Drunk Again," "No Action," "Roadkill," "Kiss Ass," and "Just Plain Pissed" convey the rage that lies within LIMECELL. The vocals and metallic guitar leads on "Bloodthirsty Stalker" will scare the shit out of you!

5. HAMMERLOCK – "True Grit: The First Five Years" LP (Steel Cage – 2006)
Travis, Liza, and Mikey are the reigning country-scum rockers in the Oakland/Bay Area. *True Grit* blasts all you left-wing whiners out of the water! Many of the songs are steeped in anger and illustrate Travis' frustration with the stagnant political climate in the USA. Listen to "Hate Radio," "Sunshine," "Media Sucker," and "American Asshole." Some of the strongest material is written about Liza. Listen to "I Shot My Baby," "Whiskey Drinkin' Woman," and "Though I Was an Outlaw." Great!

6. HELLSHOCK – "Shadows of the Afterworld" LP (Black Water – 2005)
With Grizzle on vocals, Keet on drums, Derek on bass, and Hopper and Ripper on guitars, HELLSHOCK produces some of the heaviest, blackest aural devastation you're ever heard! "Afterworld," "Night Terror," and "Fathom Unknown" are some of the darkest music ever unleashed by human beings! Flip this magnificent, threatening, bleak opus over—you get more grim paeans celebrating death. We rip through "No Dawn in Sight," "To Hell," "Welcome to the Void," and "Reaper the Wind"! This is an excellent record!

7. DEAD MOON – "Trash and Burn" LP (Empty – 2001)
DEAD MOON represents everything that is right about America. Mr. Fred Cole and Mrs. Toody Cole are the poet laureates of the great Northwest. When they sing "40 miles of bad roads with potholes / I know, I know, I know where the money goes," they nail that discomfort, that uneasiness that we all have felt. When DEAD MOON plays "Never Again," "The Way It Is," and "Shadows of the Night," you get chills—the hair on the back of your neck stands up! DEAD MOON is an American treasure!

8. COCKSPARRER – "Here We Stand" CD/LP (Captain Oi! – 2007 CD / Pirates Press – 2009 LP)
COCKSPARRER is a living legend!! It is great that these rock 'n' roll working-class heroes are finally getting the recognition that they deserve while they are still active—still having a laugh!! On "Here We Stand," Mr. McFaull and company sing about the demise of the factory workers jobs on "Too Late." "Gotta Get Out" is the most powerful skinhead-rock song written in this decade!! This record is packed with instant anthems for you blue-collar types. Listen to "Spirit of '76," "Don't Stop (Believing) Don't Stop (Being Yourself)," and "Time to Make Your Move." Fucking brilliant!

9. EVIL CONDUCT – "Eye for an Eye" LP (Knockout – 2003)
Fuck yes! These veteran skinheads from Roermond, Holland captured the moment perfectly on *Eye For An Eye*. The songs touch on every aspect of skinhead life. "Down the Pub" (beer), "No Pain No Gain" (tattoos), and "Bad Days Are Over (The Worst Is Yet to Come)" connected to "Mr. Politician (We Don't Like You)" is absolutely accurate!! There is also "Intolerance" (self-explanatory) and one of the universal skinhead laments: "We Got Nowhere to Go." Every song on this LP is charged with truth that can only be obtained from the streets.

10. AVSKUM – "Uppror Underifrån" LP (Prank – 2008)
Yes! Mr. Sanderson and his Prank Records have released multiple salvos from this esteemed Swedish band's material. Bashing, brute hardcore from the second the needle touches down. Along with the god-like TOTALITÄR, AVSKUM has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that the veterans with their vast hardcore arsenal are the kings of punk!

EPs:
AVO / BLURTERS – "Hated & Proud" split EP (2000)
TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" EP (Feral Ward – 2007)
86 MENTALITY – "Life Trap" EP (Grave Mistake / Minor Disturbance – 2004)
STRUNG UP – "Warfucked" EP (Tank Crimes – 2005)
BONECRUSHER – "Our Nations Burning" 10" EP (Longshot – 2009)
NEVER HEALED / VIOLENT MINDS – split EP (Spiderghost Pressgang / Vexed – 2007)
BRODY'S MILITIA / NUNSLAUGHTER – split EP (Haunted Hotel / Hell's Headbangers – 2007)
KNIFE FIGHT – "Burning Bridges" EP (My War – 2004)
GOVERNMENT WARNING – "No Way Out" EP (No Way – 2005)
FED UP / CONDITION – "Stand Proud" split EP (United Riot – 2003)
WASTED TIME – "Shameless" EP (Grave Mistake / Brain Grenade – 2005)

HONORABLE MENTIONS:
PISSCHRIST / KVOTERINGEN – split EP
DEATH TOKEN / KYKLOOPPIEN
SUKUPUUTTO – split EP
ANNIHILATION TIME – "Feel It" EP
WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "The War Can Go On Forever / Black Becomes The Sun"
STITCHES – "Automatic" EP
SHORT FUSE – "Blight" EP
TERMINAL STATE – "Sick" EP
TOE TO TO – "Slap of Reality" EP
TEAR IT UP – "I Feel Better Already" EP
REDUCERS SF – "Don't Like You / Situations"
ADOLF & THE PISS ARTISTS – "This Is Your Law" EP
THE BELTONES – "Naming My Bullets" EP

BOB GOLDIE

Choosing your favorite ten records of an entire decade is a gargantuan task and one much more complicated than one might imagine. Seriously, you could easily start listing great records off the top of your head, but when you truly scrutinize them and ask yourself, "Does this really merit a 'top ten' of the whole fucking decade?," you'd be surprised what gets eliminated. That said, everything is still completely subjective to the moment, of course, and if I made this list a month from now I'd probably pick a couple of different albums. Most of the records that made the cut are representative of bands that affected me on a certain level in the last ten years, so often the one album mentioned is symbolic of the group's larger output. And that criterion is what helped me reduce a larger list down to ten.

TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank – 2007)
I'm assuming these guys deservedly made it to a few other people's list, but how can I not include them as well? Not too many bands can keep putting out killer records over a twenty-year period and still blow people away. Seriously, every song I've ever heard by TOTALITÄR revives my passion for hardcore. And is it possible that this final album that marked their twentieth anniversary is actually their best ever? That could be a winnable argument, but I don't even think such a distinction with TOTALITÄR exists; *everything* this band has done has been phenomenal. Can you name another band (besides GAUZE maybe) that has accomplished this seemingly impossible feat? Untouchable.

OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP (Vinyl Warning – 2004)
Occasionally feeling jaded from over twenty-five years of listening to punk, I find that it's extremely uncommon for a band to really captivate my interest enough to give their record repeated listens, but when I first heard this OBSERVERS LP a few years ago I couldn't take the damn thing off my turntable! The song "Symbols, Slogans, Lies" had me starting the track at the beginning over and over again like an obsessive, drooling addict. I found myself embarrassingly singing aloud as I was listening to this album on my headphones while walking to work. The music is catchy and driving, while the singing is captivatingly melodic in a Shawn Stern sort of way; and the lyrics are cynical and intelligent, which is the perfect combination in my eyes. I should also mention the RED DONS, which is practically a continuation of this band and just as fantastic, but it was the OBSERVERS album that led me to discover the talent of Doug Burns and therefore makes this list.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
I went through a skinhead phase in the '80s and started listening to lots of Oi! records. Eventually the generic music and moronic nature inherent in many of the groups sort of turned me off and I got rid of most of those albums. But there were a couple of major exceptions, like BLITZ, who actually played first-rate punk that blew away most of their contemporaries and those records still rank among my favorite. CRIMINAL DAMAGE takes the same honor of towering high above the hundreds (thousands?) of mostly mediocre "street punk" bands I've heard this decade. Yes, they

wear the BLITZ influence on their sleeves, but the excellent song writing and musicianship displayed on this LP and *No Solution* (their fantastic second album) allows the band to merit a standing of their own. And their gig in San Francisco a couple of years ago was one of the most energetic shows I've ever seen in my life! This LP is guaranteed to get repeated plays, so you might want to consider getting a backup copy.

EXPLODING HEARTS – "Guitar Romantic" LP (Screaming Apple – 2002)
The story of this band is like a Greek tragedy. The EXPLODING HEARTS were so fucking good that they could have been the BEATLES of modern punk had not a horrific car accident robbed the lives of three members just as the band was reaching great renown. *Guitar Romantic* and *Shattered* (featuring singles and alternative versions) are *must have* albums for any punk who digs superb power pop and catchy punk along the lines of the BOYS and early CLASH. EXPLODING HEARTS were hands-down one of the greatest punk bands of all time, and *Guitar Romantic* belongs in the sacred canon of essential and timeless records.

GOVERNMENT WARNING – "No Moderation" LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
When the whole Y2K hardcore thing happened I was psyched because it was a refreshing turn in the right direction towards real hardcore and away from the meathead metal that destroyed the genre. And although there were some good bands that came about during the era, nothing truly moved me. A few years later an even better movement of traditional hardcore revitalization emerged with bands that not only paid homage to the sound and aesthetic of first wave hardcore punk, but also had an authentic feel to them in their own right. Among these bands are some killers that deserve mention such as WASTED TIME, NITAD, and DEEP SLEEP, but GOVERNMENT WARNING's *No Moderation* stands out as the most representational of the pack, coming out during the zenith of this revival wave and being one of the best hardcore albums I've heard in years.

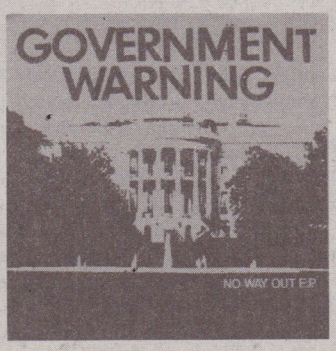
NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – LP (Kick N' Punch – 2003)
This is another representational album on this list for a larger body of bands that all deserve mention. Over the last five years or so there has been an absolutely mind blowing crop of bands coming out of Scandinavia that have captured the essence of that perfect point where punk, melodic hardcore, and rock 'n' roll meet. The most noteworthy of this genre are Sweden's VICIOUS and REGULATIONS, and Denmark's GORILLA ANGREB and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. All four of these groups have put out releases that could likely make this list, but NHFTK gets the cake for having the most diverse and catchy LP that grows on me with each repeated listen. Comparisons don't come easy, but for the sake of those who don't know of this band, imagine mixing AGENT ORANGE with ARTICLES OF FAITH, the CLASH, and some of the better UK82 groups. Destined to become classics, I strongly recommend NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and these other aforementioned bands if you haven't heard 'em yet (in which case you've truly been missing out).

JAY REATARD – "Blood Visions" LP (In the Red – 2006)
I used to have friendly disagreements with a friend I worked with at Wax Trax Records in Colorado over many contemporary garage rock bands because I couldn't stand dumb shit about sex and beer and he thought those sorts of groups were the bee's knees. One group he tried to get me into was the REATARDS, but I was so cynical with the genre, and admittedly thought the name was dumb, that I barely bothered to give 'em a try. He assured me I was a fool. Sure enough a few years later I discovered he was right when I finally heard one JAY REATARD's new solo EP's and was freakin' amazed! Jay has somehow managed to take the essential elements of late-'70s new wave and modern garage rock, and blend them together in such a way that it comes out sounding like a garage version of the ADVERTS (one of my favorite bands of all time). And the lyrics are not stupid! Well, maybe a little. The *Blood Visions* LP captures this period of Reatard's second incarnation perfectly, and it excited me so much when it came out that I pushed it on everyone I knew. His new stuff might not be as good, but this LP is definitely one of my favorite records of the decade.

SEX VID – "Drugging" EP (Kill Test – 2006)
SEX VID is amazing on so many levels. First off is the music, of course, which is perfectly chaotic, frantic, and raucous, and makes you thank the stars that you've discovered hardcore at some point in your life and that you're not some dumb fuck like everybody else. Without sounding like a revivalist effort, SEX VID manages to authentically capture the fucked up dissonance that DIE KREUZEN, VOID, and the NEOS once embodied, especially in this debut EP. Another thing about this band is that they're genuine, they're ugly and unnerving, and they don't care for superficial imagery. And try looking up something about SEX VID on the internet and see how even the name of the band can fuck with you. Lastly are the live shows the band puts on, which are short and furious, and leave you wanting to call your old hardcore friends that don't go to shows anymore so you can admonish them for being losers and missing out.

SPITS – 12" (Slovenly – 2003)
Yes, there were a few garage and punk bands in the 2000s that captured the weird new wave vibe that made some late '70s bands sound so cool (most notably the incredible EPOXIES), but none of them completely floored me like the SPITS did when I first heard them. How do you describe these guys, the rejected offspring of the RAMONES and the MUMMIES? Or maybe you could imagine that this is what DEVO would have sounded like if they were more punk and less art rock? Either way, these cats were way too authentic for the dance punk posers (who unfortunately hijacked the new wave revival), and were also so freakin' weird that they turned off most of the serious "punks;" in other words, the SPITS were one of the greatest bands of the decade! Almost always wearing stupid costumes, the two brothers who make up the backbone of the band have a penchant for the bizarre and put on a great show. All of their records are great, but this one, the second of their four self-titled albums, is their best in my book.

MUSIC MACHINE – "Ignition" LP (Sundazed – 2000)
I was like a screaming, fainting teenage girl at a BEATLES concert when this record was released at the turn of the millennium. Imagine one of your favorite bands of all time having a "lost" album released of all first-rate songs (not shitty demos and live tracks) that you've mostly never heard before or even knew existed. This band was so important in my life that I give them credit for being the major impetus leading me to become an obsessive devotee of '60s punk and psychedelic music. I even named my radio show after the band! But the MUSIC MACHINE is monumental beyond my subjective whims, they deserve to be in the canon of '60s rock and roll essentials. And these dudes were punks of their day, wearing all black and getting bottles thrown at them by rednecks as they toured the country during a time when looking like they did was an invitation to getting your ass kicked (much like being a punk rocker in the '80s or you telling me this band sucks). Sean Bonniwell was so cool that freakin' Jim Morrison even copied him! Their music is a combination of haunting, melancholic ballads and straight up garage punk, and I would argue that this lost album is better than their official LP (but on par with the other "lost" album, *Beyond the* Garage) because there are no lame cover songs anywhere to be found. Turn on the MUSIC MACHINE!



MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

This top of the decade is a tough one. I came up with a list of stuff that grabbed my attention immediately on a first listen and 'til this day stand out as great records.

LPs in no order:

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus – 2009)
The hardcore record that has gotten the most spins on my turntable in the last year. I swear I jump up and down every time I play it.

YOUNG WASTENERS – "We Got Ways" 12" (Kick N' Punch – 2002)
Denmark giving us old LA/US hardcore punk because we forgot how to do it right. Nevertheless, it is a great record cuz "we got fucking ways."

VICIOUS – "Alienated" LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
More infectious than H1N1—this shit spreads quicker than a fucking virus. Catchy, catchy, catchy!

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
Good song writing, good record—throwback to BLITZ style stuff, and I like it.

LEBENDEN TOTEN – "State Laughter" LP (Wicked Witch – 2005)
Cranked up really high on a train ride home, I thought I was gonna be in one of those news breaking stories where a man goes insane and hurts people in the subway—this shit can drive one completely nuts.

GOUKA – "Program" LP (Putrid Filth Conspiracy – 2005)
GOUKA had multiple releases and never let me down. Powerful, bass heavy hardcore that destroys.

FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)
Are you kidding? FRAMTID is the hardcore crust band that most boring ass bands need to take notes from. When it is done right it rips.

COLD SWEAT – "Severed Ties" LP (Rock & Roleplay – 2002)
This band impressed the hell out of me. Take ripping Midwest-style noisy old hardcore, then mix it with elements of older SXE bands and you've got COLD SWEAT. This record is fucking great!

MARKED MEN – LP (Rip Off – 2003)
This is my retreat from noise and chaos—when I want some melody and balance in my life I get off on shit like this. MARKED MEN, hmmmmm, very nice record.

TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank – 2007)
Longest running band that I can think of from Sweden that still churns out amazing records. TOTALITÄR knows how to write a great fucking HC/punk record and they still do it.

7"s in no order:

GORILLA ANGREB – "Astma" EP (Kick N' Punch – 2004)
Less X influence on this release than the later stuff they did, this is pure GORILLA ANGREB that has songs that are timeless and unique. Completely mind blowing riffs, energy, and melodies that will haunt you.

AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ – "Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud På Film" EP (Havoc – 2002)
Great record that brought a rejuvenating sensation to many punks in the US who got to see them live. Excellent in energy and attitude—we needed a band like this at that time.

KRIEGSHÖG – "Hardcore Hell" EP (Hardcore Survives / Heartfirst – 2008)
This fucking record made the hairs on my arms stand straight up. It fucked me up. I mean from the intro where the child screams, to the shots and bomb drop—urgh, theatrical it is, visual it is. KRIEGSHÖG dragged its listeners into a cloud of chaos and hardcore bliss. I completely love this record.

FEROCIOUS X – "Befria Fran Vanda" EP (Overthrow – 2006)
Arghhhhh! The noise, what is not to love. If you can't deal with fuzz and distortion then move on because FEROCIOUS X is not for you. If you are into this shit then lap it up; you know you live for it, I do too.

SEX VID – "Drugging" EP (Kill Test – 2006)
Excellent debut release. SEX VID brought something innocently yet intentionally to us all and it drew attention. Great record.

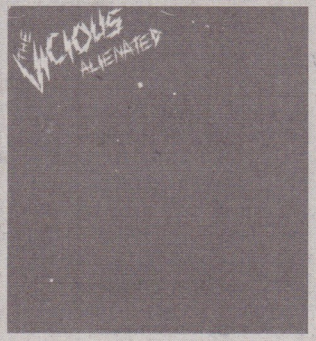
OTAN – "El Indomable" EP (Mindless Mutant – 2006)
"Corre"! Cabrones!!!!! I love this desperate and raging fucking punk out of Spain. Classic tune, great record.

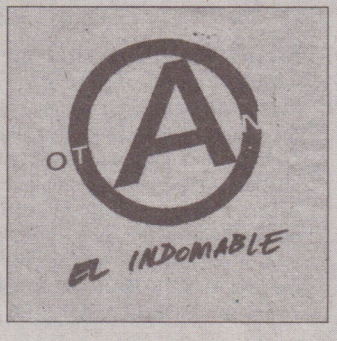
KIELTOLAKI – "Maailma Menee Helvettiin" EP (Moo Cow – 2006)
Finland's reminder of how great early hardcore was from there. This band with a handful of others pulled from their roots, and not from some bullshit outside influences, to create a great Finnish beating and I love every second of it.

GOVERNMENT WARNING – "Arrested" EP (Grave Mistake – 2007)
"Arrested"! I don't need to say anything else—that amazing track won me over on this one.

KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO – "Helvetin Elementit" EP (Mercy! Mercy! / Kämäset Levyt – 2005)
This band brought us a complex hardcore record that raged and did not fall into the arty, weird, experimental shit that I loathe.

CHRONIC SEIZURE – "Brainsick" EP (Fashionable Idiots – 2006)
Brainsick has a great sound to it and takes me back to any show I have witnessed by this band. They have always been great, vomiting vocalists and all.





ROBERT COLLINS

LIFES HALT! – side of "Start Something" split LP with WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? (Youngblood / 625 – 2001)
LA's LIFES HALT kicked me in the balls the first time I saw them in 1998 (I mean literally, as in someone's foot connected with my business), and the beatings continued until their break up in late 2001. LIFES HALT! is the band that got me excited about hardcore all over again, and they played it with so much heart, and an intensity that I don't think has been matched since. For the purpose of this list, I am lucky that *Start Something* was released in this decade. For myself personally, I'm lucky to have been on the other side of the record.

CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP (Prank – 2006)
CROW sat in the recesses of '80s Japanese cult status until they reformed and then visited the USA in 2001. Crow (vocalist and lone original member) recruited a killer band for his reemergence into the punk scene, including Tomio (JUNTESS, SABAZZ), Baby (324), and Iron Fist (G.I.S.M.), and the power of the new line up was (and is) crushing. Prank released a single that was great, and the band followed up with a 12" that was almost as hard to track down as their '80s releases. But then came *Bloody Tear*. It sounds like CROW broke into IRON MAIDEN's studio and had their way with it...Tomio's guitars almost overshadow the vocals; wailing leads layered upon crushing rhythm tracks all absolutely peaked. But the star of this record is Crow, and his vocals are unparalleled on this release...powerful, enigmatic and completely unique, the vocals make this more

than a hardcore record, and more like an experience.

LEBENDEN TOTEN – "State Laughter" LP (Wicked Witch – 2005)
No one sounds like them, and if that isn't enough of an accomplishment in itself, LEBENDEN TOTEN also completely rules. Their influences might not be that hard to pick out, but LEBENDEN TOTEN takes noise punk to new and dizzying heights on this LP. I have listened to *State Laughter* so many fucking times, and it has bummed out so many of my friends and loved ones. They are just a complete and total aural assault, in the purest sense of the words.

HERO DISHONEST – "When the Shit Hits the Man" LP (ifscociety – 2007)
HERO DISHONEST completely annihilates the three LP rule (the rule that states that no punk can release more than three quality albums) with this release, by far their most blistering. These Finns have eschewed the Finnish hardcore model in exchange for a bare bones attack that is equal parts pure anger, unchecked wit, and total ferocity. After three excellent full lengths, *When The Shit Hits The Man* fucking nails it. Fast and completely uncompromising hardcore punk.

ACURSED – "Livet är Den Längsta Vägen Till Helvetet" LP (Putrid Filth Conspiracy – 2002)
Perhaps the darkest, most depressing Swedish hardcore record ever.

SPITS – 12" (Slovenly – 2003)
Is this cheating? While it's certain that the SPITS are the party band for the new millennium, is it fair for me to include their self-titled full length on my list? I ask this, of course, because all four of their full length releases are self titled, so in the interest of not copping out, I'll say that the Slovenly Records LP tops my list, with hits like "Rat Face," "Spit Me Out," "Take Back The Alley," and "Let Us Play Your Party" there's no way you can go wrong. It's like RAMONES on glue, riding the short bus to art school.

FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)
It's possible that I'm including this LP simply because of what FRAMTID represents, and the complete and total devastation of their live shows (which is truly overwhelming...it's kinda like getting run over by a tank), but then I slapped *Under The Ashes* on just to make sure I wasn't remembering the record through rose-colored beer cans, and it turns out that, indeed, FRAMTID is total kings of the Japanese crasher crust world. DISCLOSE might have paved the way, but these FRAMTID tracks are fucking unstoppable, and paired with the intensity of their live shows, they simply must be one of the best bands of the last decade.

IRON LUNG – "Sexless//No Sex" LP (Prank – 2007)
Can any band in the US or abroad match the unchecked brutality of IRON LUNG? I think not; they have taken the powerviolence torch and fueled it with gasoline. The *Life.Iron Lung.Death* LP proved that they were a force, but *Sexless//No Sex* is a flawless attack.

NICE VIEW – "From Apeman to Spaceman" EP (Blurred – 2000)
There's a reason that this is the only EP on my list. The reason? This record is perfect. A hardcore record that will completely rip your face of with its intensity, but is still packed full of brilliantly crafted songs and actual hooks that get stuck in your head for days. NICE VIEW might also be the best live band I have seen in my entire life. Each of their releases in the 2000s could have made the top ten (the live LP from 2006 is brilliant, *13 Views* is even faster, though the riffs are strangely happy, and 2009's aptly titled *Sophisticated And Barbarian* is a frantic exercise in patience and execution), but it's just my luck that this EP was released in the year 2000, just under the wire.

SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS – "Kängnäve" LP (Prank – 2004)
Swedish D-Beat got done to death in the 2000s, and in the process it got repeatedly watered down and more boring. I challenge you to refer to this second SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS LP as "boring" or "watered down." From the first detonation on side one, when Magnus screams, "Unleash the fucking fury!!" to the very last note of the MANU CHAO tune that closes side two (and sounds an awful lot like AEROSMITH's "Train Kept A'Rollin'"), this LP just fucking smokes, and wastes just about anything else in the genre. Worth mentioning that TOTALITÄR's *Vi Är Eliten* and AVKUM's *Uppror Underifrån & Punkista* are equally crushing Swede-beat masterpieces, it's just that I happened to see SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS about 70 times during this millennium, and therefore these songs are ingrained in every fiber of my being. SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS was never overly serious about anything...anything except making killer fucking records.

CISSIE SCURLOCK

Fuck it. I'm doing a top 24 and no one's gonna stop me.

7" & 8":

TOTALITÄR – "Allting Är Pa Latsas" EP (Really Fast – 2002) and "Spela Bort Allt Du Har" EP (Död & Uppsvälld – 2002)
Is TOTALITÄR the best hardcore band ever? Probably. Well, at least most days I think they are. I couldn't pick *only* one of their EPs and in all honesty, even though I didn't mention it, *Vi Är Eliten* is better than most of the stuff on my list. Both of these 7"s are untouchable; some of TOTALITÄR's best stuff. Is TOTALITÄR the best hardcore band ever? Fuck yes!

KRIEGSHÖG – "Hardcore Hell" EP (Hardcore Survives / Heartfirst – 2008)
Once the teens of this century hit I'll be done hyping this record. I promise. Until then I implore you to blare this crushingly intense piece of music in your headphones for best effect.

LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Death Culture Deprivation" 8" (Overthrow – 2007)
The first riff on *Death Culture Deprivation* is so infectious that it eases you in, and then you realize that there's this harsh buzzing and incessant hissing assaulting you, and it's not a problem because it's still somehow insanely contagious. The few times I've seen LEBENDEN TOTEN live they played most of the songs off *Death Culture Deprivation*, but the perfect set would be to see them play it start to finish with "Vampires" and "Near Dark" thrown in as an encore.

AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ – "Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud På Film" EP (Havoc – 2002)
These songs may seem straightforward, but listen to the scratchy, unruly, and blissfully dirty guitars and voice-cracking venomous vocals and tell me that this music isn't inspirational. HUL and YOUNG WASTENERS deserve shout-outs as well, but out of the bunch APA has gotten the most listens on my stereo.

KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO – "Helvetin Elementit" EP (Mercy! Mercy! / Kämäset Levyt – 2005)
KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO is one of the most interesting and maniacal sounding hardcore bands to emerge from the '00s. Some of their songs have parts that sound like someone is throwing a wild fit and sometimes it sounds like a disturbing party, and then they lay down a frighteningly perfect hardcore riff to bring it all together. I recommend owning all of their records, but if you're just getting started then pick up *Helvetin Elementit*. The B-side track "Sivustakatselija" is KYKLOOPPIEN's greatest hit.

SKITKIDS – "Välkomna Till Paradiset..." EP (540 – 2005)
Although, they're definitely a serious band SKITKIDS isn't afraid to have a little bit of fun with the Swedish hardcore tradition and I applaud them for that. On *Välkomna Till Paradiset*... the rock-to-rage quota is mixed together flawlessly and these riffs are forever seared into my brain.

POIKKEUS – "Jarjetön Maailma" EP (Crust War – 2003)
POIKKEUS is from Japan, but *Jarjetön Maailma* is a genuine impassioned nod to Finnish hardcore. Mid-to-fast-paced dark riffs, slurred vocals with clever accenting (some barking and laughing), powerful roll-filled drumming, atmospheric production, underlying melodies; it's all here. Perfect execution of this style.

KIELTOLAKI – "Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen" EP (Combat Rock / Moo Cow – 2007)
These songs fly by with uncontrolled fervor—tons of quick, loud, and unpredictable instrument flourishes to keep your ears occupied. These guys must've been overdosing on some vicious tendencies when writing this EP.

OTAN – "El Indomable" EP (Mindless Mutant – 2006)
El Indomable has continued to grow on me over the last few years. The passion expressed in OTAN's music is striking. The recording has a timeless Euro quality to it, which compliments the primal nature of the raw and vicious songs. "Corre" is classic mix-tape fodder.

WASTED TIME – "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake – 2007)
No Shore nabs the number ten spot because it reminds me of everything I enjoy about hardcore. It's like this decade's version of the LIFE'S BLOOD 7". Not that WASTED TIME sounds similar to LIFE'S BLOOD, but I hear these songs and I want to jump around and play air guitar and sing along. There's nothing fancy about the playing or production, but the whole thing pummels and rages in the best way.

12" & full-length recordings:

DEATHREAT – "Consider It War" 12" (Partners In Crime – 2003)
Duh.

FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)
A lot of hardcore LPs start to drag after awhile, but not *Under the Ashes*. The pandemonic intensity of these songs is unrelenting. Gets better with the years too. I hope that I'll eventually see a FRAMTID show because I need to be punished by this music in a live setting.

PAINTBOX – "Earth Ball Sports Tournament" CD/LP (H:G Fact – 2000 CD / Prank – 2008 LP)
I kick myself regularly for not going to see PAINTBOX when they played in Austin in 2004. *Earth Ball Sports Tournament* is a one-of-a-kind wonder with instruments that I thought I'd never find acceptable on a hardcore record (flute, violin, harmonica, chirping birds). The riffing and guitar work is legit mind-melting, and the rest of the music is also insanely well-played. *Earth Ball Sports Tournament* has changed my bad mood to good on many occasions; it's that infectious.

COMPLICATIONS – demo (self-released – 2005) / BORN DEAD ICONS – "Salvation on the Knees" LP (Partners In Crime – 2001)
I can't pick one over the other, so I'm gonna be an asshole and group them together. Both bands share members and both are totally unique and great. I probably listened to the COMPLICATIONS demo every day for a year straight. It's a good, gloomy soundtrack for walking around town. *Salvation On the Knees* is just a solid hardcore record. It came out at a time when a lot of bands were either too simple or too complex. One of the things I like about it is that it's completely original sounding while mostly staying in the confines of standard dirty hardcore punk. It will always remind me of '01-'02 and I still listen to it regularly.

DESTINO FINAL – "Atrapados" LP (La Vida es un Mus – 2009) / INVASIÓN – "La Caza" 12" (La Vida es un Mus – 2008)
Atrapados has all the qualities of several direct punches to the gut and head, whereas *La Caza* is the alarm siren of impending mental disintegration. Given these two exciting options, how can I possibly choose?

PESD – "Politikarepoizonekurvae" CD/LP (Trujaca Fala CD / Prank LP – 2006)
This record is manic and undeniably unique. I can list some of the influences that stick out, but PESD isn't quite like any other band. Their sound is mean and pissed as hell and it has that really cold, isolating atmosphere that distinguishes a lot of Polish punk and hardcore. There are many disturbing layers of madness to dissect on *Politikarepoizonekurvae*. If I was one of the last people on Earth, I'd listen to this daily and it would be all the company that I'd need.

CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP (Prank – 2006)
CROW has mastered the ability to create a mood with their music. The songs swell from dark, tense brooding to crushing fast hardcore to metallic pounding, and there are lots of anthemic chaos mantras that demand listener participation. The disturbed vocals and masterful solos are taken to the next level on *Bloody Tear*, and every time I pull it out for a listen, I play it at least a few times before filing it again.

GORILLA ANGREB – "Bedre Tidre" 12" (Kick N' Punch / Feral Ward – 2006)
This record sounds so fucking cool. I love the way the twangy, reverby guitars float around the dual-sung vocals. Upon hearing *Bedre Tidre* for the first time I instantly bought a plane ticket to Philly so that I could see them live (they never played in Chicago). Definitely the highlight of the mid-'00s Danish punk permeation.

ORdER – "Taep'O-Dong" LP (H:G Fact – 2002)
The bizarre production, off-time parts, and frantic vocals really make *Taep'O-Dong* stand out. ORdER crafts insane sounding UK82-referenced punk that retains an odd upbeat quality, and the atmosphere of their records is massive and consuming. "Space Junk" from the WARHEAD split is my favorite ORdER song, but this LP is brilliant the whole way through.

INEPSY – "Rock N Roll Babylon" LP (Feral Ward – 2002)
As far as mixing hardcore and rock 'n' roll is concerned, I don't think any other band has ever done it better. These dudes appear to be consumed by the spirit and energy of both genres. Virtually every song on *Rock N Roll Babylon* is an anthem and I shout along (and make up the words I can't understand) through each listen.

Runner-ups: TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP and EP and split with DISCLOSE, LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Nuclear Flowers" EP and both LPs, NEEDLES – "Twisted Vision" EP, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Das Reich / Secret Police," CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP, OBSERVERS – "So What's Left Now?" LP, SEX VID – "Communal Living" 12"

VINNIE LA RUSSA

Here's my top ten for the decade. Most of these you know so no reason for me to wax poetically. In alphabetical order.

BAD DIRTY HATE – "100%" EP (Irukandji – 2007)
I released it. I love it. I'll listen to it until the day I die. Shit, I still have enough of these so that if I live to the age of 70, I can listen to 1.35 new copies a year.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – LP (Feral Ward – 2006)
Dismissed it upon release, but now accept it in all its brilliance.

DARVOCETS – "Authentic Music From Another Planet" 12" (Painkiller – 2006)
Just absolutely brilliant. Entertaining, interesting, and educational.

FM KNIVES – "Useless and Modern" LP (Broken / Moo-La-La – 2002)
How do you describe an angel?

FRAMTID – "Under the Ashes" 12" (Crust War – 2002)
If I ranked this list this would be #1. So absolutely crucial.

KALMEX AND THE RIFF MERCHANTS – "It Goes to Eleven" CD (Intolerant Messiah – 2001)
Psychedelic and brutal. NO LESS, part two. Infinitely more punk than you'll ever be.

KRIEGSHÖG – "Hardcore Hell" EP (Hardcore Survives / Heartfirst – 2008)
Absolutely perfect record. Everyone should listen to this and attempt to emulate it.

PLUTOCRACY – "Snipin' Pigz" LP (Six Weeks – 2000)
Second West Bay entry to my list. One of my all-time favorite bands. Jaw-dropping insanity, genre defying.

RAJOITUS – "Maailman Hautajainen" LP (Putrid Filth Conspiracy – 2008)
Totally heavy, fast, and rough. Awesome.

RUNNING FOR COVER – demo (self-released – 2003)
Yeah, they had an EP and LP that followed, but the demo blew my head off. Take the best qualities and sounds of '90s power violence, then multiply, exceed them. I wish someone would commit these to a more lasting format; my tape sounds like crap.

SEX VID – "Tania" EP (Dom America – 2007)
Perfect way to end this list and decade. All of their records would have a place at my top-ten table, but the haunt of *Tania* led this one to this list.

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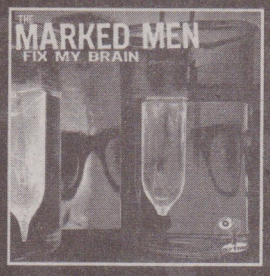
MARKED MEN



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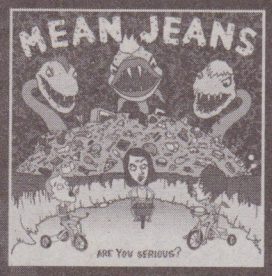

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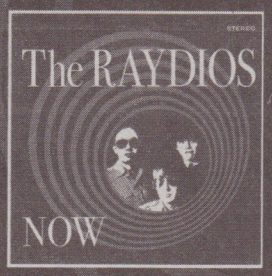

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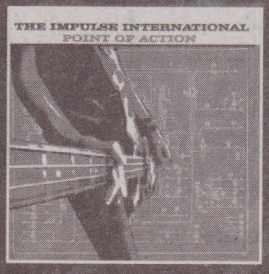

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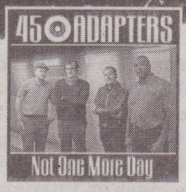

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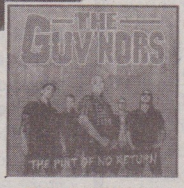

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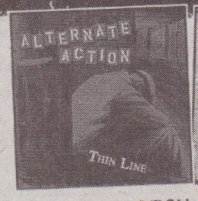

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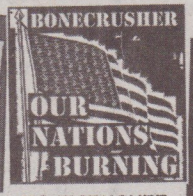

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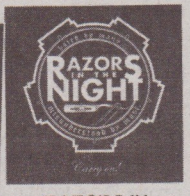

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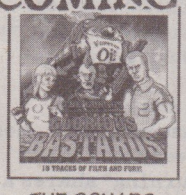

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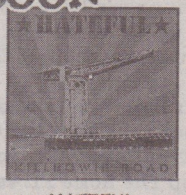

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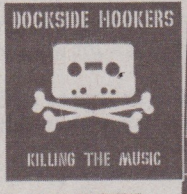

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Interview By Bruce Roehrs

with the help of Mike Josephson

MRR: Hello Iain. Bruce here to interview Control for MRR! Can you introduce the members please?
Iain: Hi Bruce. Nice to hear from you again. Control are: Jeff "Wattie" Walter on guitar, Kandi on guitar, Klaus on bass, Greg on guitar, Baz on drums and yours truly on vocals.

MRR: Where do you guys live?
Iain: We are based on both sides of the pond, hence the three guitarists. Two of the guys live in Oregon—Wattie and Greg. The rest of us live in Sussex in the south of the UK. It may seem odd, but it works really well as I write the music and lyrics, then when the songs have been demo'd, they are sent to Oregon for the other guys. Recently when we were recording the debut album, we recorded the majority of it in the UK and then sent the tapes to a studio in Oregon and Wattie went in to add his parts. It was then sent back for mixing, and the results seem to prove it is worth all the hassle.

MRR: When did the band form and how long has Control been playing live?
Iain: The band started in early 2008 and started playing live in later 2008, our first show being with Hardskin at the House of Oi! in Crawley, Sussex.

MRR: Hardskin, from the UK, and Les Teckles, from France, play Oi! music with respect and finely-honed skills. Have you been able to determine how skinheads in general respond to this music that is considered by some to be a "piss take"? I know that Fat Bob from Hardskin loves Oi! music and collects Oi! records to the point of being an archivist. Do the skins and punks in Europe view Hardskin and Les Teckles as novelty bands or as legitimate skinhead champions? Do any of the skins consider Hardskin's approach to be a mockery of Oi! music?
Iain: I can't speak for Les Teckles as I do not know enough about them, but I booked Hardskin to play at the venue I promote once a month, The House of Oi!, and they put on a fabulous show. I had people contact me saying they do not like them when I started advertising them, for the reasons you state, that they are taking the piss, etc. I have to say it was the first show which was not packed, but they played a superb set and were great guys. I would not have booked Hardskin for the House of Oi! if I did not think they were a first rate band, as I only book what I see as first rate bands to headline the shows here. So the answer to your question, unfortunately, is that a lot of skins do not like them, but equally, a lot also do like them.

MRR: Was Beerzone active right up to the time that Control started?
Iain: Beerzone stopped playing about a year before Control arrived, as I had to write a different style of songs and didn't want the two to cross over.

MRR: Are any members of Control from Beerzone as well?
Iain: Yes. Most of the guys were in Beerzone at some point. I thought it would be crazy to find a whole new batch of guys when I had some of the best players in the scene right under my nose. It may sound like it's the same outfit, but one listen tells you it is anything but the same.

MRR: Control seems to take a lot of its influences from '80s UK punk such as your old band Intensive Care. Is that a deliberate move on your part?
Iain: Nothing was done on purpose, but like yourself, a lot of people mention that it is more along the lines of Intensive Care. I think we can put that down to the fact that both bands were started in times of economic hardship, strikes, riots and general unrest on the streets.

MRR: How would you describe the politics and/or attitudes of Control and its individual members?
Iain: We see ourselves as a band which sings/protests about the things we feel are going wrong in our everyday lives. It doesn't matter if the ruling party is left, right or anything else; if they are ruining the workingmen's lives with idiotic policies, like we have in the UK today, we will get our point across about it through our songs.

MRR: Your lyrics about many of the issues that working class men and women confront everyday are very cynical. "Keep The Home Fires Burning" shares a bitter opinion with: "We're a bankrupt nation, a broken state." Do the English members of Control vote? How about the expatriates in Oregon?

Iain: The opinion is not very bitter—it is stating a fact. The UK is in the most debt of any nation in the western world, has no cash reserves, is selling all its utilities and commodities, and is getting worse and worse. The present government seems to think the way to get out of debt is to spend even more. A classic case of this is, until this year, the Inland Revenue (a tax collection agency for the government) said they would never allow tax bills to be paid by credit cards as that would put people even more in debt. Well, lo and behold, they are in such a state now as people simply have no money or savings whatsoever anymore as they have had to use them to put fuel in the car, feed the kids, and to keep a roof over their heads due to the excessive tax regime in this country, that the government are now accepting credit card payments, even though it means the people will never be able to repay the borrowing from the cards.

The UK also currently has an unelected leader who is officially the worst chancellor in the country's history. You could not make this all up, and people are fed up being taxed to the hilt to pay for the government's misspending. They seem more hellbent on constantly fining motorists than dealing with the knife crime epidemic on our streets. If someone fifteen years ago had foretold what this country would be like today, they would have been locked up and put in a straightjacket. Does the band vote? Yes, but the choices are very limited to say the least and this country is crying out for a party with a modicum of common sense, as it would win by a landslide.

MRR: Iain, you sing about welfare and being on the dole in the UK in "Welcome To The Nanny State." That's a huge problem here in the USA as well. You write: "Cameras are everywhere, recording what you do. It's 1984 for real, Big Brother's watching you." Do you think it will ever result in food riots, fighting in the streets? Some of the lyrics in "Stand Up And Fight" indicate that you have strong feelings about this!

Iain: I would not be surprised if riots become a very common thing in this country as it really is upside down at the moment and the country is hellbent on sending all our money to help nations all around the globe who have a more stable economy and less debt than we have! It seems to me like the classic case of the politicians simply not being capable of admitting that they have made an absolute mess in their own backyard, as to admit they did would mean the end of their own self-serving careers. It needs a massive shake up from top to bottom.

MRR: Much has been written about the British healthcare system. In theory it sounds like a very good program. Free healthcare for all the residents-it seems like a dream come true! America currently has the worst healthcare of any industrialized nation. Does the concept of socialized medicine translate into good healthcare for the general populace? People from Canada, Sweden or England have mentioned extremely long waits at the hospital for relatively minor ailments. Do you believe that the best doctors abandon practicing medicine in countries where healthcare is socialized?

Iain: I have used the facilities in the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK and the treatment I received was absolutely first-rate. What I did notice, though, was that there is a dire shortage of equipment for the over-worked staff to use. My partner gave birth to our latest daughter only last November and as soon as she was checked with a piece of equipment to monitor the baby's heart beat, three different nurses tried to take the equipment away immediately for other patients!

The current government shouted from the rooftops that they were investing vast sums of money into the service to bring it back up to scratch, but it was all hype and the money was totally misspent. What they actually did was pay absolutely obscene amounts of the money to consultants to try to come up with ideas to help streamline the system. By the time these fat cats came up with their ideas, which anyone with an ounce of common sense could have told you for free in two minutes, there was no money left for equipment, upgrading facilities or rewarding the staff with a more acceptable salary. It was nothing short of criminal, but unfortunately we see too much of it from this current shower. Only in today's newspapers it said that Gordon Brown (the Prime Minister) has misspent the equivalent of 50,000 (around $80,000) for every person in the UK over the past ten years, with the net benefits zero!

The hospital wards are filthy, people are left on trolleys in the corridors, and then to make it 100 times worse, there are no health checks in place whatsoever for people wishing to move to the UK. The result being that we now have a health service in terminal decline as the wards are absolutely overrun. Doctors are flown in from all around Europe every weekend and are put up in five star hotels. Their flights are paid for and they are paid obscene amounts of money, all just to help out as more and more of the doctors from the UK seek to work better hours, with better equipment and for more money in private practices. It is terrible that they have to do this, but most doctors do it because time and again their pleas for help are completely ignored as the government is far too busy messing up literally everything they touch.

The NHS is and was a fantastic idea and should be the flagship system for the whole

world to aspire to, but due to the government's criminal neglect and stupidity, it is dying on its feet. To get an appointment for non-life threatening problems, you can easily wait four months or more. My partner recently needed an emergency appointment, and was told it would be in 23 days! Last but not least, when the government is not simply closing down perfectly adequate local hospitals to try and make new super-hospitals, they now seem hellbent on closing all the maternity and emergency wards in the big cities and expecting people to drive sometimes as far away as 60 miles to the nearest unit. Due to this appalling situation, hundreds of people have died while trying to drive to emergency wards in towns miles and miles away. These people would be alive today if the government had not completely mismanaged the nation's money and had used it properly, instead of giving it all to the fat cats, instead of where it was needed-to the hospitals.

You only have to look at recent outbreaks of the new superbugs, MRSA and others, which are killing people in the filthy hospital wards. More and more people, including my elderly mother, are absolutely terrified of going anywhere near a hospital as they are more worried of dying from infection caught in a hospital than any ailment they may already be suffering with!

MRR: Does Control have a boisterous skinhead following in Europe?
Iain: We have only really just started so it is difficult to say what type of following we are building. Judging by the friend requests on the MySpace site, it is your typical mix of punks, skins, hooligans and herberts. When deciding to start this new project, I thought long and hard, and the more I thought, the more we all agreed that there is a space for some new bands in the street punk scene at the moment there really is. So the idea was, if we can write good enough songs and deliver them in the right manner, with decent production, maybe, just maybe, people will appreciate the effort as there is a huge scene across Europe, the States and Australia, and a real lack of bands who stick to their guns. So people will hopefully appreciate to have a band that will stick to their roots and take the scene forward. The initial signs are very, very positive.

MRR: "Guilty By Association" touches on a subject very familiar to skinheads in Europe as well as in the USA-fearful citizens and persecution by the authorities. Iain, is there a problem with Nazi "skinheads" in Europe currently? How about at a large festival like the Rebellion Oi! Fest that you recently played this summer? With money tight and jobs scarce, sometimes the boneheads need a scapegoat, like immigrants.
Iain: Absolutely not. The vast majority of Skins just love a beer and good old fashioned working class punk music from people in bands they can associate with, and shows are a place where they can let their hair down, pardon the pun, and get their frustrations out by singing along and taking part in the pit, listening to the bands they love. We played Rebellion last month and it was a very well attended festival with absolutely no problems at all. "Guilty By Association" is simply about the ignorance of the public when they see a skinhead or punk walking down the street and feel threatened and make an opinion before meeting the person.

MRR: If a large brawl erupted in front of the stage at a Control show, would the band elect to stop the show and attempt to intervene in the situation? Some bands in the USA have been criticized for looking the other way when there has been obvious trouble in the front of the pit. Is it the responsibility of the band to police the fans?
Iain: If a major brawl started, and kids were in danger of being hurt, of course we would try to stop it. Surely it would be the job of the club's security to sort it out and keep control of things?

MRR: What significance do football and beer have in Control's perspective of the UK? How important is beer to you guys?

Iain: It is well known I like football, and all the lads enjoy a quiet beer after they have done their day's work, but neither important in any way to the band Control. When we take the stage, we only have one thing in mind—to play to the best of our ability and to hopefully get people talking about us and spreading the word to try build our reputation as a live act.

MRR: Are the dates and cities confirmed for your US tour with The Business?
Iain: Yes! I got the confirmed tour dates through only yesterday. Here it is:
11/25 Angelo's in Pomona, 11/26 Slide Bar in Fullerton, 11/27 Key Club in LA, 11/28 Thee Parkside in SF, 11/29 Voodoo Lounge in San Jose, 12/01 Boardwalk in Orangevale, 12/02 The Vixen in Nevada, 12/03 The District in Eugene, 12/04 Satyricon in Portland, 12/05 El Corazon in Seattle, 12/06 Gustos in Boise, 12/07 Club Sound in Salt Lake City, 12/08 Benders in Denver, 12/09 Launchpad in Albuquerque, 12/10 Club House in Tempe, 12/11 Beauty Bar in Las Vegas and 12/12 Brick by Brick in San Diego. It is really cool that we are touring with The Business as earlier this summer the two bands released a split 7" picture disc single on Germany's People Like You Records.

MRR: We haven't seen The Business in the Bay Area for quite awhile. Are they still able to play at the top of their game? I've heard that Steve Whale is not playing guitar with The Business currently. Is this true? Are you privy to information about some of the younger bands that will be opening for Control and The Business on this tour? And what are the names of some of the up-and-coming new bands in the UK that play quality skinhead rock 'n' roll that we should know of?
Iain: I can say hand on heart that the current line-up of The Business is absolutely superb. They are as solid as a rock and are totally superb. Steve Whale has not been in the band for some time now. The dates have only just come out so I am as yet unable to say who else is playing, but I am looking forward to it, as I love seeing new bands in all the different places we play. At present the best new bands over this way are Skingraft and Skinfull. You could do a lot worse than check them out.

MRR: I hear that your new "Hooligan Rock'n'Roll" CD out now on Step-1 Music will be available on vinyl soon from Longshot Music and Contra Records. When will this LP be hitting the streets?
Iain: I am pretty sure that it is coming out in early October. We are really looking forward to it as Mike at Longshot has been superb with us, releasing our 7" split with Marching Orders recently and offering to help promote the upcoming tour.

D-clone

D-Clone, hailing from Nagoya City, Japan, plays full blown, noisy D-beat in the vein of Discharge and Disclose. I've had a chance to check them out before in Tokyo and absolutely blew my fucking mind! The noise coming out from two full stacks and bunch of pedals with very well orchestrated use of noise (and not noisy in the excuse of shitty equipment) was nothing like I'd experienced anywhere. Show spaces in Tokyo have a great sound system and usually the PA system catches all the sound very well, but their amps were powerful to the point that the PA system is barely able to match their extreme wall of noise coming directly from their amps. Following the Disclose US tour few years back, this has been one of the very few chances that we get to see a contemporary Japanese noisecore band from Japan here in the states. After playing few shows in the states during their "Zatsuon Souzou Hanongaku USA Tour," I got to sit down and interview Hiroshi from D-Clone.
Interview/Translation conducted by Daiki Kusuhara
Photos by Jack Barfield

MRR: Please tell us who's in the band, what instrument they play, and a brief history of the band.
Hiroshi: Hiroshi on guitar & vocals, Yutaro on bass and chorus, and Shinji on drums. We've been around since 2004, so for four years now.

MRR: How's the tour so far?
Hiroshi: It's been great!

MRR: Any differences you guys felt between US and Japanese shows?
Hiroshi: All bands bringing their own equipment for shows (in Japan, the venue provides all the amps and drums), and the idea of house shows. We would never be able to do this kind of stuff in Japan.

MRR: Where did the band's name come from?
Hiroshi: First, me and Shinji were drinking friends and weren't intending to play in any bands. But with being drunk, we just went to a rehearsal space and played Discharge and Disclose covers alot. Been doing that even though we weren't intending to play shows, but we got booked one show and needed to decide on a band name. I was reading a book at the time and found an article about how Crucifix was a Discharge "clone," which was rather used in a negative context. Also, we wanted to continue playing the d-beat style, so that's why it's "D-Clone".

MRR: Is there any message or theme as a band?
Hiroshi: We wanted to deliver our message not sounding so pushy.

MRR: So when the reader reads it, the reader will have its own interpretation of it?
Hiroshi: Yes. I'm writing from my own perception and expressing my own view points. I'm not sure if my English is correct though, haha!

MRR: How is the recent punk scene in the Nagoya/ Toukai Area?
Hiroshi: In the past, there haven't been much crust bands in the area besides us and few other bands. We were the young generation band and after playing for some years, recently there's been newer crust type of bands emerging.

MRR: Any certain bands?
Hiroshi: System Fucker, Folkeis, and Attack SS. These bands are the new bands that recently emerged.

MRR: This came out a little while ago (March of 2009) but tell us about the "Nagoya City Hardcore" compilation from MCR Company. How did this come about?
Hiroshi: Initially, Reality Crisis and Clown brought the idea to us. We're in a rather different stance or seniority group as them and there's been some differences in how we think. They're sort of Yankee type of guys (Japanese term for bad boys or rebel mentality people) and are pretty scary/dangerous dudes! Haha! We didn't have a relationship before but since playing for a while in the Nagoya area, we've made some connections and started playing together more. Those guys wanted to include the top running bands of the Nagoya scene and that's how it ended up as the five bands (Clown, Reality Crisis, Zilemma, D-Clone, Demolition). We weren't too sure why we were picked in the list though. I guess we were seen in a positive way, so they asked us. We weren't really thinking about it too much. Also MCR Company is a legitimate label and has good distribution so we were for it.

MRR: What kind of influences do you guys have as a band?
Hiroshi: It might be obvious, but Disclose, Discharge, older d-beat bands, Swedish hardcore, etc. It's not directly implemented in our sound but we listen to alot of other types of music as well.

MRR: Other than the stuff you mentioned, what else?
Hiroshi: Metal, grind, just any raging music with distortion. Even harsh noise, and even J-pop!

MRR: What's the best way to get in touch with D-clone?
Hiroshi: MySpace is our main contact but I only understand simple English. We've gotten alot of emails but had to ignore it. Not because we're avoiding it, but we get alot of emails every day and it takes us one day to read one email (asking friends to help, researching, and translating it via online). If you're going to send emails, please send short, simple emails please.

Daiki: Thanks for participating in the interview!
Hiroshi: Arigatougozaimasu!

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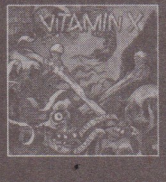

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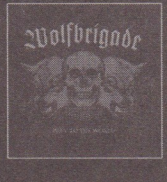

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COMPLICATIONS

Photos by Jack Barfield

MRR: You guys were in Born Dead Icons before, and have been playing music together for a really long time. Do you think there's a solid chemistry? Do you prefer playing in a band with these people?

Pete: Yeah, we wouldn't play music together if we didn't like each other.

Francis: It's been like ten years since we've been playing together, and we get along. It's fun practicing together.

Alex: It's also kind of a habit. Sometimes it's weird playing with different people. With us, we have our vocabulary and ways of working together.

Pete: Francis can say, "do this," and he'll mimic something and Alex knows exactly what he's supposed to be doing. Also, we have the same musical interest—we share a lot of the same taste, so that definitely helps writing songs.

Francis: It's fun playing with different people, but it's much simpler with people you've known for a few years. Everything works faster because you don't have to explain for ten minutes how to play something.

MRR: Born Dead Icons was still a band when Complications formed, so why did you decide to start a new band?

Francis: There was a large break when Alex moved to Germany for nine months. We decided to do something different while he was gone.

MRR: Alex wasn't originally in Complications?

Jo: We had another drummer in the beginning. He was from the garage scene and we started practicing with him at that time, but he quit after awhile.

Francis: We were waiting to start Born Dead Icons again when Alex got back. We started Complications as a little project.

Alex: I think I practiced with Complications a few times in the beginning.

Pete: Yeah, he helped out on drums for a couple of songs. We didn't have a drummer for a few months when we started. It was just me, Jo, and Francis rehearsing with no drummer and that was really bad.

Alex: Towards the end of Born Dead Icons, at one point both bands were going, but Born Dead Icons was getting a little old...

MRR: How did the sound of the band develop? It's a lot less hardcore than Born Dead Icons. It's more rhythm oriented.

Pete: Well we were trying to do something different. We just have different things we listen to that aren't strictly punk, so that probably plays a lot into the way we write music.

Alex: Something that helped too is when I joined the band there were a lot of songs already written and the old drummer had a different way of playing, so I kind of had to adapt and change a little bit of the way I play drums. Otherwise I might have done a lot of the same things that I was doing in Born Dead Icons.

Francis: I tried really hard to create something different from Born Dead Icons, but it's really hard.

Alex: Yeah, we're all the same people.

Pete: We have our patterns and that's hard to break for sure. We didn't wanna have a mold. We wanted to start a band that was more fun where we could try different things. We didn't want to be like this song is not hardcore and it's not fast enough. We write a song, we find riffs, and we just try to play with them and see happens. If it's good we keep it and if it's not then we change it.

Jo: We're into hardcore a lot, but there are so many people trying to do hardcore, so we just wanted to do something different.

MRR: Do you get bored playing hardcore?

Pete: Not so much bored. It's always fun to play straight-up punk or hardcore. It's just that we wanted to have different experiences.

Alex: The band started at the same time as Born Dead Icons, so they had to do something a bit different otherwise there would've been no point to having another band.

Francis: With this band we try with every song to do something a little different but always the same kind of thing. With Born Dead Icons I never got bored playing those songs because we tried to do all the songs kind of different, and it was fast. But with this band we think more about the rhythm, like the bass and the drums.

Pete: There's more room to try different things with the vocals too. Like if you play a really fast song that only lasts a minute you can't try different things with your voice. You can only really scream. I think Francis is singing different now, just because of the song structure.

Francis: I still sound like Lemmy. [*laughter*]

Pete: Well there's no escaping that.

Francis: I tried to do something different but it didn't work.

MRR: Compared to most bands these days it takes you guys a long time to put new material out. You did the demo in 2005, 7" in 2007, and the LP is just coming out now...

Francis: I think Complications was started as a project more than a real band, like we didn't want to push too hard to record and tour. For me, I was thinking we wouldn't play shows or tour at first—just having fun at the practice space. But I think I was the only one.

Jo: Yeah, but then Francis had an operation at some point and we had to stop for a while.

Francis: And Alex moved to Boston. All of our jobs are complicated.

MRR: Do your jobs interfere with playing music these days?

Pete: Definitely Francis'. [*he's a long-distance truck driver*]

Francis: No, I don't think it's only me.

Pete: I work night shifts and Alex works in the day, so sometimes it's hard to find a common time for everyone.

Francis: Even when I'm in Montreal and want to practice there's always someone working at night. It's kind of hard. That's why I still think of it as a project because if it was a real band…

Pete: …There would be a lot of pressure to put more energy than we can afford to into it. In Born Dead Icons the focus was the band is touring and the band is putting records out and stuff. With Complications that's not how we started it, so we set up other things in our lives. I co-owned a business for a while.

MRR: Do you think it gets harder to keep touring as you get older or is it just the way your lives are going?

Pete: A little bit of both. Some of us have health issues. Of course when I'm in my 40s I'm not going to be able to tour for six months in a row and sleep on hardwood floors all the time.

Alex: I think we're trying to not let it interfere. I am at least. I don't wanna be like, "Oh no, I'm too old to do that." It's never gonna be like with Born Dead Icons when we would tour for two months. I don't think it's possible to tour for two months anymore anyway.

MRR: Is this the first tour that Complications has done? Have you done other touring?

Pete: This is the first real tour. We've done out of town shows before. We played Pointless Fest in Philly and we played in Texas, but we flew there and back.

MRR: Do the people coming to the shows seem to be familiar with the band? Are you getting people that come because they know you were in Born Dead Icons?

Pete: It's hard to say. Some people have heard of us. Some people come out of curiosity because maybe the poster says ex-Born Dead Icons.

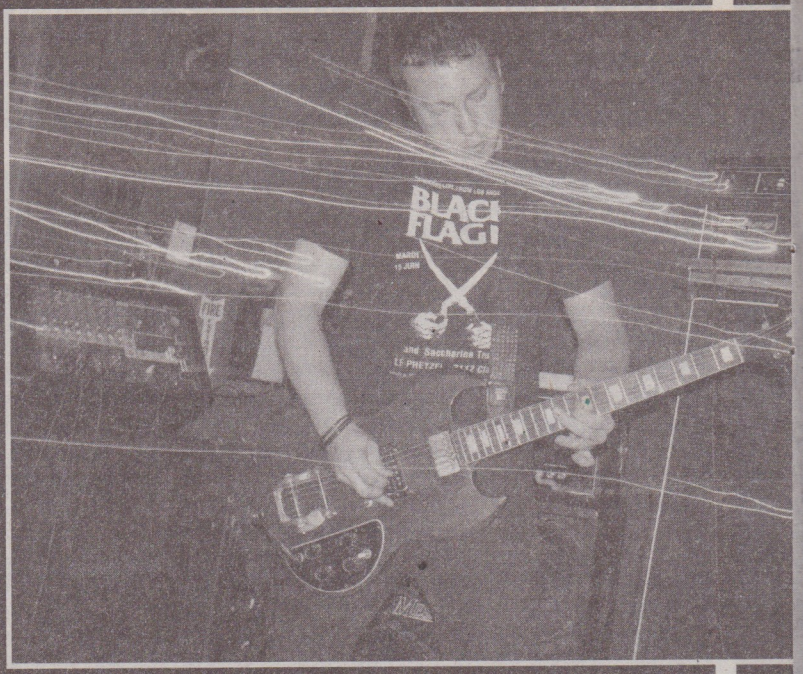
Alex: Even the 7" has been out for so long that I don't think people remember it, which is fun because people have just really discovered us as we're playing.

MRR: You were saying that there are younger people that have been coming to the shows?

Francis: Yeah, that's right. It's been at least five years since we've been on a tour, so it's just strange. In LA, just thinking about the LA scene…I heard that there are like ten scenes in LA, but the show we played had lot of young people, which was refreshing.

Alex: Yeah, it's inspiring to see all these younger people getting really into it.

MRR: Yeah, does it ever get harder to relate to younger punks as you get older?



Pete: It depends where. In LA I didn't find it was hard at all. They're really into putting on shows and putting effort into the scene.

Jo: It's cool to see younger people going to the shows and being excited.

Alex: Yeah, it reminds us of how exciting it can be.

Pete: It's a bit of a kick in the butt for us too. You know, don't become too jaded about the punk scene or about whatever makes you passionate. I find it's easy to just do your own thing and forget about what goes on in the world, punkwise or politically or whatever. It's nice to be out of our bubble and see what happens elsewhere. It's really inspiring. It gives me energy to get stuff going back home too.

Francis: It's much easier to become jaded in Montreal because it's only local bands. It's not like San Francisco—there aren't tons of Japanese bands coming, and tons of bands touring through. In Montreal there aren't that many shows.

Alex: It's like a dead end. If you go to Montreal you have to come right back down. You can't do a loop.

Francis: And people are scared about crossing the border.

Pete: And the scene in Montreal is getting a little old. Not in a bad way, but there aren't that many young kids. Not as many as here or LA especially, so I think Montreal might be lacking that boost of energy that comes from having young kids getting into punk and just doing research on all the bands, and starting new projects. I mean we definitely have a lot of people in Montreal, but yeah we're getting older.

MRR: Do you think the punk's scene changed since the last time you toured?

Alex: We were talking with Yannick [*from Feral Ward*] before and he said that it's not possible for a band to tour the entire US anymore. There are no scenes in between the coasts and larger cities. But at the shows there have been a lot of familiar faces and new people, so it's good that it's still alive.

Pete: Well it's a short tour, it's not even two weeks, and we've done tours for two-and-a-half months and you come back home and you get really sick and tired. But this is more laid back. Most of the drives are short and it seems more laid back. I guess we're not all into getting totally wasted every night either so that helps.

Jo: Yeah, we leave that for Simon [*Complications roadie*].

Pete: Simon's the representative of the party. [*laughter*]

COMPLICATIONS

Alex: You hear a lot of people saying that everything is slowing down and there are not a lot of people at shows, but I don't see it being like that. I think there are a lot of new people.

Pete: And the shows are small in a way that we don't like fill up warehouses, but then again no one knows us, and the people that come to the shows are really, really into the music and they're really enthusiastic. I'd rather play in a living room for like thirty people that are into the music than play in a huge bar for a bunch of people that just don't give a shit. But people come because they wanna listen to the bands playing, and the energy counts more than the amount of people you draw out to a show anyway. LA definitely had that.

Alex: Yeah, In LA we played with new awesome bands too.

Pete: Yeah, we played with amazing bands there.

MRR: Who'd you play with?

Pete: Tuberculosis and Poliskitzo. So yeah, definitely a fun time down there.

MRR: So as you keep getting older do you think you'll keep playing music; will it always be a part of your life?

Pete: I don't have much of a choice I think. Right now it's gonna be forever.

Jo: Well as we said before we have more responsibilities and we are definitely going to tour less but we are still going to play music. I still have the passion for playing music.

Alex: I don't think I could be happy in life without playing music. It's what I've done all my life, so I think there would be something missing.

MRR: I wanted to talk a little about the lyrics, especially on the LP. I don't know if I'd call them bleak, but there's almost like a lost sense of hope or something about them.

Pete: Well I mean when you look at what goes on in the world it's easy to lose hope. I mean it's cool we're a punk scene and we do positive stuff; we do DIY actions and stuff. But when you look at the global picture it's really hard to picture a brighter future. To me it seems like things are going to get worse, just like the Kyoto Protocol and stuff like that. You can say "Oh yeah, developed countries are making an effort to reduce their CO2 emissions." But the thing is we've been supposedly doing that for many years and the process of global warming is not going to stop even if we stop now. The limits that countries give each other is like, "Oh yeah, we'll reduce them by 2020." That's bullshit; it's going to be too late. Just stuff like that, when you look at the global picture it's like how can it actually get better. The thing is that the change is so gradual and we need radical change. When you think of the food industry and there aren't many corporations that own a lot of what we eat. I'm a vegetarian and I eat nuts. That's cool. The coffee's free trade but where do the nuts come from? All these little things add up and you think where are we going with this? It's cool that we do punk shows and we talk about smashing the state but in the end sometimes I feel like the state is actually smashing the scene more than anything else.

MRR: Why are all the lyrics in English given that French is your first language?

Pete: I've always written the lyrics in English. I've tried to write some in French, but I find that it's harder to write in French because it's a longer language and it's hard to fit a rhythm into what you want to say. I grew up listening to UK bands, so to me punk was in English. I didn't discover French punk until a little bit later in life.

Alex: We've always sung in English, even when we could barely speak any English. It just came naturally because all the bands we were listening to sung in English. That probably seems weird I guess. Also, French has a very distinctive sound to it...I like a lot of French punk obviously, but it's got a different kind of sound. It's always more Oi!-ish, or more melodic maybe.

Pete: I was gonna say French Oi! is amazing, but can you picture Killing Joke singing in French? I can't [*laughter*] I mean it would probably be good... But singing in English means that everyone can understand what we're saying whether we're in Lithuania or the US.

Alex: And it was never a conscious decision to sing in English.

Pete: Most of what I read is written in English. I read books that are English, so to me it comes naturally to write about the stuff that I read about in English.

MRR: From talking to you guys I get a sense that you hate most of the recordings that you do. Why is that?

Jo: Well we were really only unhappy with the 7", but even then we were kind of happy with it.

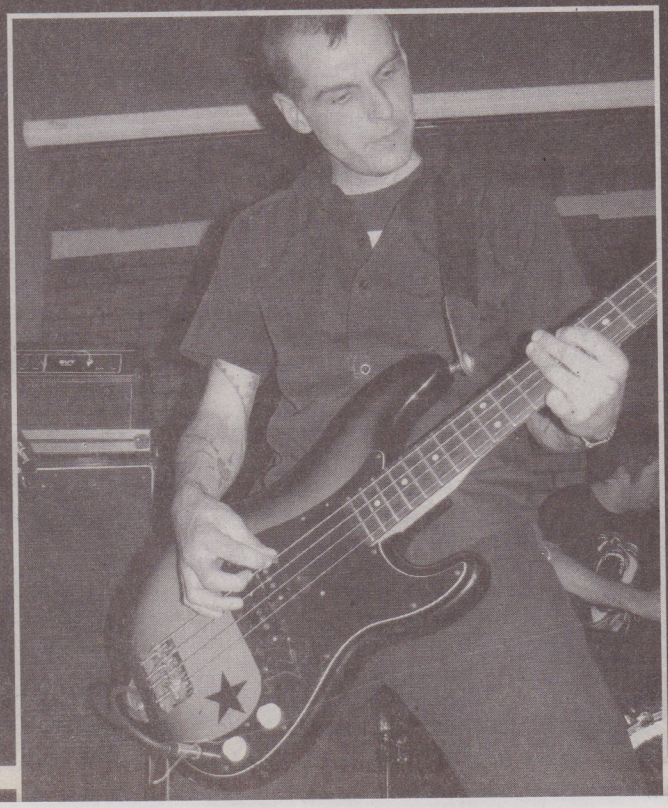
Alex: The last album was probably the best recording that we've ever done including even everything with Born Dead Icons.

Francis: All of the recording we've done with Complications, like the 7" is all right, not great.

Pete: We didn't have much time to record it.

Francis: But the demo was better than all of the Born Dead Icons recordings. The LP is good and we like the songs. It was the first time we had plenty of time to work on it and record it, so that's why it's better.

Alex: Yeah, every time we recorded something with Born Dead Icons we'd come out of the studio and there was always something that would bother us about the recording. Like, we'd think of things we should have done differently, or the snare would sound bad or we'd be unhappy with the



guitars, but with the new LP we had time to sort out all the little details.

Pete: I don't think a lot of bands are happy with their recordings. There's always this sound that you're aiming for, but it never really comes out exactly the way that you want it, either because of the studio or the amp that you use. Our amps, maybe they're good for live shows, but in the studio they're really not as good. It's really hard to find a balance between what you can do in the studio and what you want.

Alex: Sometimes you have a bit of a vision of what you want before you go into the studio. Usually I think I know what I want for drum sounds, but it's really hard to get it through. But the guy that recorded the LP knew exactly what we wanted.

Pete: With the album, I think we actually sent the engineer a bunch of stuff that we're into, so he could get an idea of where we're coming from and our influences.

MRR: Will the demo ever come out on vinyl?

Francis: Yeah, we just transferred the old tape.

Jo: We transferred the reel a month ago. The dude that did the recording moved and I tried to get in touch with him but it took forever. But yeah, at some point it's coming out.

Francis: We want to remix it a little bit. It was done in a hurry, and we want to tweak some of the mistakes.

Pete: And Francis had a cold when he did the vocals. I mean they're good.

MRR: Will that be on Feral Ward?

Jo: Yeah, but that's a surprise. Yannick doesn't know. [*laughter*]

Francis: Yeah, sometime next winter it'll come out.

MRR: Do you have any new material?

Pete: We have two new songs, but we're not playing them on this tour.

MRR: You played a new instrumental the other night.

Pete: Oh yeah, we did that one.

Jo: There's no lyrics for it.

Alex: Yeah, the next record is gonna be a double LP conceptual album. [*laughter*]

MRR: So have all of you always lived in Montreal?

Alex: None of us are from Montreal.

Jo: I'm from a suburb that I don't want to mention that's pretty close.

Alex: With Born Dead Icons we were originally all from the suburbs of Quebec City and we moved to Montreal to do the band and then changed guitar players. At one time there were punk shows in Quebec City and a big punk scene, but it's long gone now.

Pete: I'm from Ottawa and I moved away from there like eleven years ago.

Jo: Basically we all met ten years ago, and we all lived in the same place with Yannick in this loft. I met Alex and Francis at a Drift show at the time and we all moved in together at some point. I met Pete when he started playing with Born Dead Icons.

Pete: As far as big cities go in Canada, Montreal is the cheapest one to live in, as far as rent and food.

MRR: That's kind of surprising.

Pete: I don't know why it's so cheap. It's getting more expensive now, but I pay under $600 for a two-bedroom apartment, which would cost twice as much in Toronto or Vancouver. Montreal is also a bit more liberal than the rest of Canada.

Alex: There is a lot going on all the time in Montreal too, which is good.

Pete: We have our own punk bar [*Katacombes*]. There's a bunch of places to play shows. We're definitely not stuck for places to play, which is nice. On tour people are often stuck in a living room, which is cool, but for them they say, "We wish we had a bigger venue." In Montreal we're lucky to have many different places that are open to having a punk crowd, and people getting drunk and partying. We're lucky in Montreal, we're not lacking resources for the punk community like some places.

MRR: Do you have more plans for touring?

Pete: Well we see how it goes. Jo's going to have a baby soon. Francis has to drive his truck. I serve coffee at night. If it can happen then we'll do it, but it's not like anyone's saying we're gonna tour so everyone get your shit together and make it happen. We all have responsibilities, so we have no set plans. If someone asks us to do a tour we'll see where we are and what we can do. We'll still record music and play in Montreal when we can.

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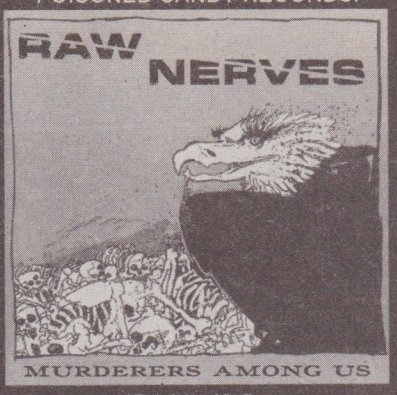

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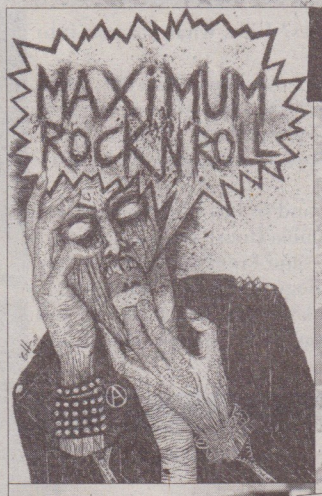

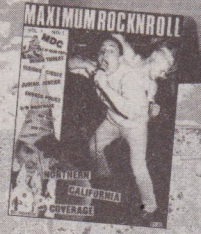

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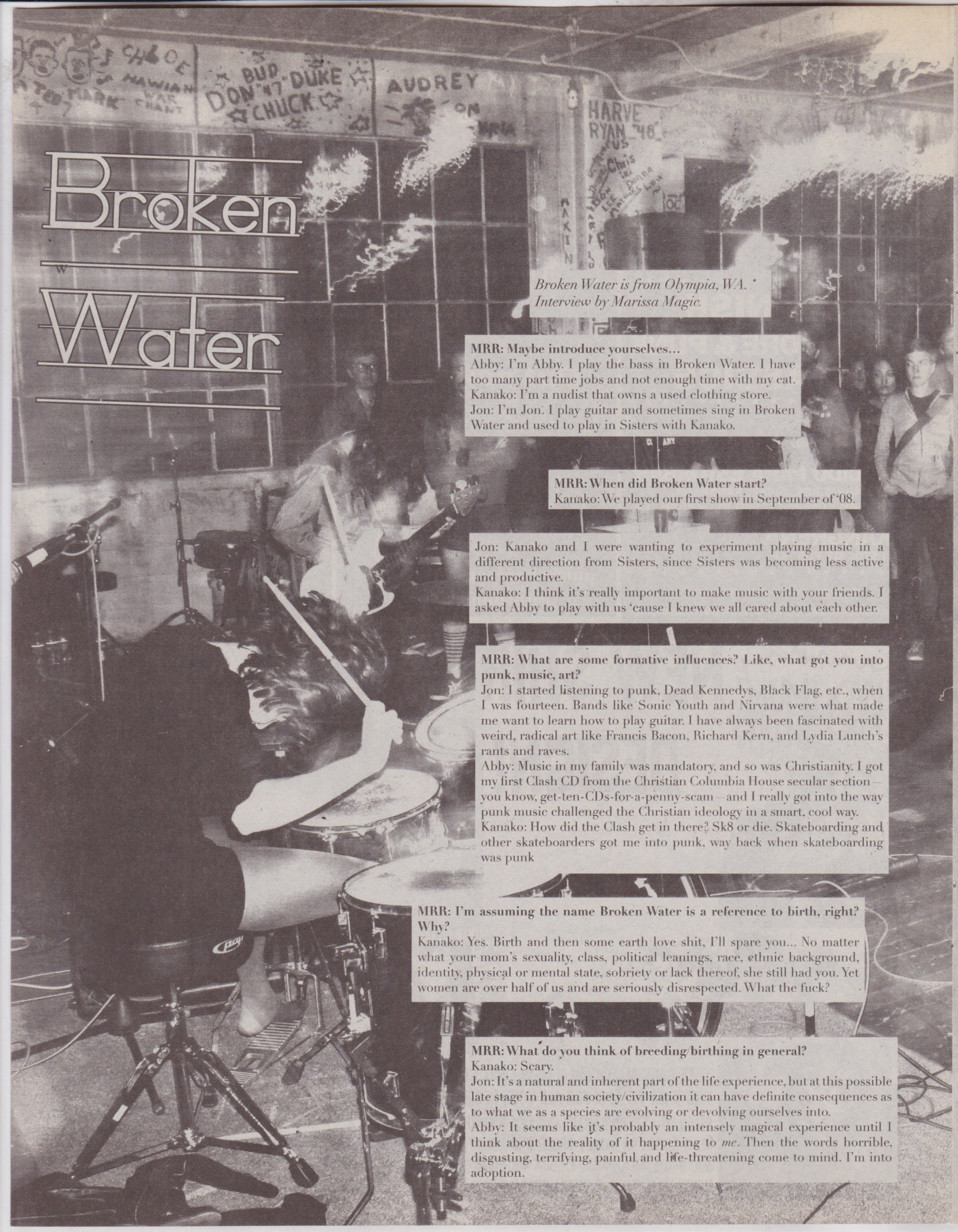
Broken Water



Broken Water is from Olympia, WA.
Interview by Marissa Magic.

MRR: Maybe introduce yourselves...
Abby: I'm Abby. I play the bass in Broken Water. I have too many part time jobs and not enough time with my cat.
Kanako: I'm a nudist that owns a used clothing store.
Jon: I'm Jon. I play guitar and sometimes sing in Broken Water and used to play in Sisters with Kanako.

MRR: When did Broken Water start?
Kanako: We played our first show in September of '08.

Jon: Kanako and I were wanting to experiment playing music in a different direction from Sisters, since Sisters was becoming less active and productive.
Kanako: I think it's really important to make music with your friends. I asked Abby to play with us 'cause I knew we all cared about each other.

MRR: What are some formative influences? Like, what got you into punk, music, art?
Jon: I started listening to punk, Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, etc., when I was fourteen. Bands like Sonic Youth and Nirvana were what made me want to learn how to play guitar. I have always been fascinated with weird, radical art like Francis Bacon, Richard Kern, and Lydia Lunch's rants and raves.
Abby: Music in my family was mandatory, and so was Christianity. I got my first Clash CD from the Christian Columbia House secular section—you know, get-ten-CDs-for-a-penny-scam—and I really got into the way punk music challenged the Christian ideology in a smart, cool way.
Kanako: How did the Clash get in there? Sk8 or die. Skateboarding and other skateboarders got me into punk, way back when skateboarding was punk

MRR: I'm assuming the name Broken Water is a reference to birth, right? Why?
Kanako: Yes. Birth and then some earth love shit, I'll spare you... No matter what your mom's sexuality, class, political leanings, race, ethnic background, identity, physical or mental state, sobriety or lack thereof, she still had you. Yet women are over half of us and are seriously disrespected. What the fuck?

MRR: What do you think of breeding/birthing in general?
Kanako: Scary.
Jon: It's a natural and inherent part of the life experience, but at this possible late stage in human society/civilization it can have definite consequences as to what we as a species are evolving or devolving ourselves into.
Abby: It seems like it's probably an intensely magical experience until I think about the reality of it happening to *me*. Then the words horrible, disgusting, terrifying, painful and life-threatening come to mind. I'm into adoption.

MRR: I keep thinking about how the idea of Darwinism has become obsolete to evolution in a way, almost harmful to it. It's made this situation where survival of the fittest in some ways ends up being survival of the dumbest. Also, technology has changed things too, as far as keeping people alive longer, making it possible for people who wouldn't normally be able to reproduce able to reproduce. Along with how women are still ultimately responsible for child rearing and how ridiculous that seems…

Kanako: Yeah, women not only birth us, but they feed, dress, and serve us when we are growing, and a majority of the time with little or no fiscal compensation. My dad had four kids because he wanted a male offspring, and me and my two sisters came along before my little brother. According to my dad, having his last name secured by a son and another sperm provider with this lineage was extremely important to him. He was always bragging about bettering the gene pool with his jizz. Sick! I guess the idea of Darwinism is interesting and understandable in terms of insects and fish, but when you're talking about humans, whom I consider *aliens* to nature due to industry, technology, and privatization, it becomes this greater-than/less-than equation, which I think is complete bullshit. No one is of more or less worth than me and vice-versa.

Financial wealth affords people to be inept. I think great wealth and power creates a disconnect and detachment that leads to isolation and an extremely insulated perspective. I think this idea that rich and powerful people think they are better than everyone else, and that most folks go along with this notion, is one root of our current fucked situation economically, politically, and emotionally. When we make believe a system where folks have more value due to cash and status, we play into our own insecurities and build up the heinous egos. The wealthiest, most powerful folks always hate themselves and take it out on others. Those bitches need to heal. I'm also interested in cultivating more hate towards land barons and the upper class. If you make more than $300,000 a year, I hate you and want everyone else to hate you, too. Like in Latin America the rich live behind huge walls with guards and barbed wire. Why? 'Cause everyone hates them, everyone knows they suck. Why don't the rich live in fear here as well? Maybe the middle class is bigger here? Maybe most of us value wealth above basic needs being met for everyone?

MRR: I feel like the rich aren't scared of us for the same reasons that the government isn't scared of us. They seem too big and powerful to destroy so we end up being apathetic zombies. Anyways, what kind of ideas is your music about?

Jon: I'm not so much trying to get across any sort of concrete ideas as much as creating an aesthetic of strange, other-worldly atmospheres. More feeling and intuition than logic and thinking. The music definitely comes first for me. My lyrics are inspired by what's on my mind at the time, but aren't necessarily trying to put forth any sort of agenda and are completely up to one's own interpretation.

Kanako: To me they are inspired by a respect for women, and all people, and working towards self-awareness.

Abby: Weird feelings. And what they sound like to me.

MRR: How do politics fit into punk?

Jon: I think punk started out as a reaction to the socio-political oppressiveness of the late '70s, early '80s, and has continued to have a rebellious, outsider, disillusioned view of contemporary politics, and strives for a radical change in belief and behavior that challenges the status quo.

Abby: I believe punk can be the perfect medium for infinite possibilities of expression. It can be about new ideas, old ideas, why ideas suck—and that definitely includes political ideas.

Kanako: The personal is the political.

MRR: There's a good deal of feminist subject matter in your lyrics. How did that come about?

Kanako: I think about the state of women a lot, and when we are jamming out new songs it's usually still on my mind, so the lyrics reflect that stream of conscience/consciousness.

MRR: Do you consider yourself a feminist band?

All: YES!

Kanako: We showcase an actual male feminist. Male allies are so fucking far and few between that we should proactively cultivate them. Get 'em while they're young and impressionable. Having Jon as a feminist ally is really fucking important to us and in general. He has a voice that other white males will actually hear. It's crazy, but as soon as I realized that men could not hear me when I talked about sexism, unless they were already allies or capable of being present, it has saved me a lot of energy and breath. I can ask questions and get them to think, but I can't make any definitive statements about sexism and be heard. No fucking way. You know. You all have tried. But those confused men can hear Jon because he has the same unearned privilege as those other dudes.

Thinking about the way oppression is perpetuated and thinking about how to deal with it, I have come to the conclusion that if people have unearned privilege, in general, it serves them to act unaware of their privilege. Also, they are unable to hear from anyone outside their privilege that is trying to dismantle their *unearned* privilege in order to protect their *unearned* privilege. Like adults have unearned privilege over kids. Adults, in general, are not going to let kids' opinions weigh in on their decisions. Or upper and middle class people can't/don't listen to poor people. Men can't/don't hear or care when women talk about women's issues. Christians can't hear Jews or Muslims. You know what I mean? Hetero-normative behavior would not continue to be reinforced if we were all listening to queers. Whites very rarely hear me when I'm talking about race issues. This is a long tangent, but seriously, feminists need male allies. Most of us need allies. I also believe the personal is the political. To be broad about where I am personally, I think it is important for myself as a feminist to research herstory and have a critical analysis of capitalism, globalization, and systems of oppression.

Jon: As a privileged white male I feel I have a certain responsibility to facilitate bringing anti-sexist and pro-feminist ideas to my peers who might not be as aware of what is going on. That means calling them out when they are being fucked up, and making them aware of their own privilege. Same goes for racist and classist issues. Unfortunately a lot of sexist dudes aren't able to hear criticism of their behavior unless it comes from other guys, and I feel that my privilege comes with the responsibility of informing them of their bullshit. It doesn't always work, but I'm always down to support feminism as an ally.

MRR: So in Sisters, and also the couple times I caught Lyrebird, there was always something else going on beyond just a band playing a show, like simple stage props or projections or what have you. How does art

play into music?
Kanako: Honestly, they are attractions to distract from myself. I get real nervous when I play and when there is something else going on, I can hide behind it. And it is also another outlet to play, make, and communicate through/with.

MRR: How important is art to Broken Water?
Jon: While I wouldn't describe us as an "art band", I think art in all its mediums is able to create an aesthetic that reinforces the attitudes and feelings of the music.
Kanako: Not as important as food and everyone having their basic needs met. However, I would be really bummed if there were not so much art in my life.

MRR: But would you say you have a pretty intentional aesthetic?
Abby: I would prefer not to bore anyone. That's why I like when Kanako projects images behind us or makes us wear crazy outfits. Takes a little pressure off. And it helps to make it feel like there isn't so much of a band/crowd division. No. You know when you see a really awesome movie, but you're like, "That would've been even better if I had been stoned?" Or you eat a really good slice of pizza, but a side of ranch would've really put it over the top? I know I'm not alone here.
Jon: I would say everything is absolutely intentional on my end. Whether the exact aesthetic that I'm trying to communicate actually translates to the audience is another thing. I leave that to the audience, and I don't expect them to be feeling what I'm feeling. I'm sure they get the general gist of it, but the actual interpretation is up to them, and that's part of the beauty of art—it is very personal for the creator and the viewer/listener, and every interpretation is equally valid.

MRR: Who does your art?
Kanako: Who ever feels inspired, has time, energy. We all do what we feel up to. We make some stuff and usually two of us like it and one of us doesn't. So we rework it 'til it works for us all.

MRR: I was thinking about the evolution of this band, like how there was Sisters with Kanako, Jon and Dillon and it was exciting and felt new but familiar. The shows were equal parts psychedelic drones and slam dancing freakouts, and Dillon went on to be in HPP, which is total straight-ahead, destructive hardcore boywar. Then Broken Water came out of it with all this shoegazey hauntedness. It's like the two sides of Sisters just split into two bands. Did you see it coming?
Jon: I'm not sure we saw it coming, but in hindsight it makes perfect sense and thinking about it now, it's kind of weird that the Broken Water/HPP split really did create two separate bands that took their respective aspects of Sisters to two extremes.
Kanako: No more boywar! I was into exploring that kind of energy, but I'm over it for now. When Broken Water first started playing together we were all listening to the Chills a lot, and I think our shoe gazerness was influenced by being obsessed with "Pink Frost." Now we have a lot of new songs and it seems like our collective voice is evolving. Abby wrote a song recently and there are some new, heavy, dark undertows and fast punk parts that are really tough and not shoe-gazey at all.

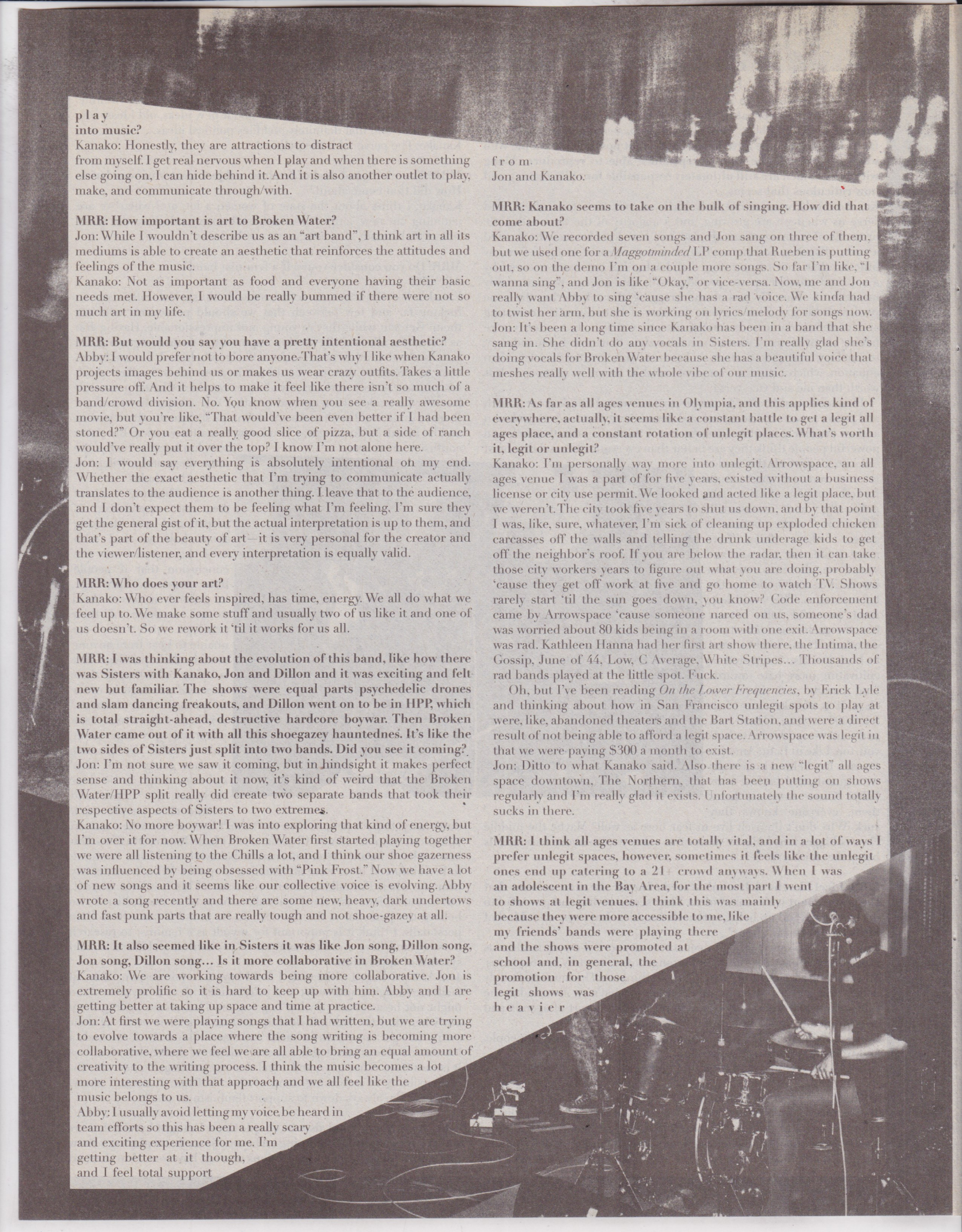
MRR: It also seemed like in Sisters it was like Jon song, Dillon song, Jon song, Dillon song… Is it more collaborative in Broken Water?
Kanako: We are working towards being more collaborative. Jon is extremely prolific so it is hard to keep up with him. Abby and I are getting better at taking up space and time at practice.
Jon: At first we were playing songs that I had written, but we are trying to evolve towards a place where the song writing is becoming more collaborative, where we feel we are all able to bring an equal amount of creativity to the writing process. I think the music becomes a lot more interesting with that approach and we all feel like the music belongs to us.
Abby: I usually avoid letting my voice be heard in team efforts so this has been a really scary and exciting experience for me. I'm getting better at it though, and I feel total support from Jon and Kanako.

MRR: Kanako seems to take on the bulk of singing. How did that come about?
Kanako: We recorded seven songs and Jon sang on three of them, but we used one for a *Maggotminded* LP comp that Rueben is putting out, so on the demo I'm on a couple more songs. So far I'm like, "I wanna sing", and Jon is like "Okay," or vice-versa. Now, me and Jon really want Abby to sing 'cause she has a rad voice. We kinda had to twist her arm, but she is working on lyrics/melody for songs now.
Jon: It's been a long time since Kanako has been in a band that she sang in. She didn't do any vocals in Sisters. I'm really glad she's doing vocals for Broken Water because she has a beautiful voice that meshes really well with the whole vibe of our music.

MRR: As far as all ages venues in Olympia, and this applies kind of everywhere, actually, it seems like a constant battle to get a legit all ages place, and a constant rotation of unlegit places. What's worth it, legit or unlegit?
Kanako: I'm personally way more into unlegit. Arrowspace, an all ages venue I was a part of for five years, existed without a business license or city use permit. We looked and acted like a legit place, but we weren't. The city took five years to shut us down, and by that point I was, like, sure, whatever, I'm sick of cleaning up exploded chicken carcasses off the walls and telling the drunk underage kids to get off the neighbor's roof. If you are below the radar, then it can take those city workers years to figure out what you are doing, probably 'cause they get off work at five and go home to watch TV. Shows rarely start 'til the sun goes down, you know? Code enforcement came by Arrowspace 'cause someone narced on us, someone's dad was worried about 80 kids being in a room with one exit. Arrowspace was rad. Kathleen Hanna had her first art show there, the Intima, the Gossip, June of 44, Low, C Average, White Stripes… Thousands of rad bands played at the little spot. Fuck.

Oh, but I've been reading *On the Lower Frequencies*, by Erick Lyle and thinking about how in San Francisco unlegit spots to play at were, like, abandoned theaters and the Bart Station, and were a direct result of not being able to afford a legit space. Arrowspace was legit in that we were paying $300 a month to exist.
Jon: Ditto to what Kanako said. Also there is a new "legit" all ages space downtown, The Northern, that has been putting on shows regularly and I'm really glad it exists. Unfortunately the sound totally sucks in there.

MRR: I think all ages venues are totally vital, and in a lot of ways I prefer unlegit spaces, however, sometimes it feels like the unlegit ones end up catering to a 21+ crowd anyways. When I was an adolescent in the Bay Area, for the most part I went to shows at legit venues. I think this was mainly because they were more accessible to me, like my friends' bands were playing there and the shows were promoted at school and, in general, the promotion for those legit shows was heavier



because there was no fear of cops finding it/shutting it down. Do you think legit places are more accessible to kids?
Kanako: Yes. I also think all ages venues are more accessible to kids. Olympia's unlegit venues are mostly house shows that are really just drunken parties with bands and I see a handful of underage kids partying with the adults, so some youngsters have figured out where the party is, but I see a lot more young people at The Northern, our local all ages venue. Most of the shows I went to in El Paso when I was fifteen to seventeen were at legit venues. I would have never seen Tree People if it was in someone's basement. I guess there are no basements in El Paso, but anyway, my parents would have never let me go if it wasn't at a legit spot. I had fake high school ID that said I was eighteen so I could get into bars in Juarez, but that wasn't to go to shows, that was to get wasted. After my parents caught me across the border (I was supposed to be competing at a wrestling match! Ha!), I was on lock-down, so only legit spaces for their loca chica. I remember missing GodheadSilo, 'cause they played at someone's house. Bummer.
Jon: I think legit all ages spaces in downtown Olympia are more accessible to kids than house shows here, definitely. I hardly ever see any underage kids at house shows and most people are chugging their beers as fast as possible. But that isn't necessarily the case everywhere. Where I grew up in Pennsylvania, there was a house that had shows just about every weekend and it was mostly underage kids. That's where I was introduced to punk rock in a live setting and I have some really great memories of that place.
MRR: The last time I saw you play was when we played a show together in Olympia, and it was really awesome because it just felt like a room full of feminists all participating, like it didn't seem like it was just an audience watching bands—it was more communal and it was interesting to me that everyone wasn't getting totally wasted. It seemed way more positive and less self-destructive. Was that show, like, a total anomaly?
Kanako: It took me by surprise at first, and then it made total sense. Sex/Vid was playing with, like, fourteen other guys across the street, so I think that's where all the non-feminists and non-feminist allies were that night. We had a safe space and didn't have to put energy into commanding it, which gets fucking exhausting in the punk/indie scene. Most likely because we had fourteen women on the bill.
Abby: That was my favorite show, I think. It was like a comfort capsule. And really fun.

MRR: As far as safe spaces go, some people see them as self-perpetuating–like if we just did away with them then the problems that create a need for them would disappear. Bullshit?
Jon: Yeah, bullshit. There's always gonna be assholes and there's always gonna be problems. We can do our best to push it to the end of the spectrum where problems and assholes approach zero, but utopia is a fantasy and access to a safe space isn't something that should be cut off in the hopes that misogynists, racists, etc., will just go away.

MRR: Can you tell me about the Olympia scene right now?
Kanako: Gun Outfit, Son Skull, White Boss, Blood Bones, Reviver, Wolves In The Throne Room, Joey Casio, Sex/Vid…These are the kids that are putting on shows and keeping it real. I want to go to shows that they are playing or play with them 'cause I will be around good people and good energy. There is also a large dance and a smaller rad indie film scene that is sprouting up. Mary Russel, lead singer of Son Skull, and April Schief usually seem to be involved in the radical dance projects that happen. It's cool to go to the Track House and watch a gang of different female bodied dancers take over the street and communicate collectively motions with punk meaning, after you watch some punk bands in the little living room.
Jon: The house show scene is still alive and well and all the best shows I see in this town usually happen in a basement. Good fucking times.
Abby: It seems like everyone I know is in a band or starting a band. And that could be annoying, but mostly, it's just really good. It's nice to be blown away.

MRR: It seems like a lot of stuff is starting/happening. Is it an influence on your band?
Kanako: I think the scene that used to be bumpin' in Oly, late '90s early 2000s, is still more of an influence to me then the current situation.
Abby: It's very motivating for me to play more, get better, get different.
Jon: Being in a town that has so many musicians and artists in it, I can't help but be inspired and influenced by everything that's going on around here.

MRR: What are some other influences?
Jon: The whole northwest environment—mountains, forests, lakes, the rain nine months a year, and the amazing summers.
Abby: The unexpected. In music and people and nature and film, blah blah. I like it when my brain doesn't get it at first. I like to feel dumb before I feel smarter.
Kanako: When I watch Sara Lund, Lisa Schonberg and Tobi Vail play it makes me wanna go play my drums. Also, currently the beats on La Chat's, Dead Prez, and Talib Kweli's albums give me lots of kick drum and high hat tricks I wanna learn/work on.

MRR: You just put out your own 7". Tell me about it.
Kanako: We are still putting them together. There is a community letterpress studio where I work and we are using it to print our covers. It takes half a day to make 100 so we are gonna be hanging out in there way more.
Jon: I really liked the idea of getting our first recording out in a 7" format and we put what I think are our two strongest songs from the demo, "Boyfriend Hole" and "Mother," on it. I think they really capture the vibe we are going for. We didn't want to wait around for a label to put it out for us, so we just decided to do it ourselves. I'm really happy with the way it turned out, although it's been really time consuming. There's something personally gratifying in putting out a 7" on your own.
Kanako: Jon really wanted to put out a 7" and when we were recording with Dave Harvey (Captain Trips Ballsington at High Command Studio), we recorded everything to two tracks on a ½" tape, so it just made a lot of sense to try and put it out on vinyl. Analog love waves.

MRR: What all did that entail?
Kanako: Putting our money together, then having the recording mastered at Jon Golden, then rejecting the B-side of the master and being really scared to call him and tell him I didn't think it was good, 'cause he is Jon-fucking-Golden. He agreed with me that he fucked up. He was really cool about it, remastered and plated it for free. Doing sound as a woman, it's really hard to get taken seriously outside of Olympia where everyone knows me. Then having the plates that Jon Golden made sent to Rainbo Records. It is a slow turn around which is cool. Really different from CD-R mentality.

MRR: About CD-Rs, and by extension the internet, what do you think of its effect on music? Positive/negative?
Jon: Well, on music as a whole it certainly makes it a lot more accessible and makes networking with other bands and venues a lot easier, although a lot more impersonal. It has its ups and downs I guess. The ups being that there are a lot of awesome bands I would have never known about without the internet, and it makes booking shows and tours a lot easier. The downs being that there is just so much out there that it can be overwhelming. Going through MySpace and listening to the millions of bands can be somewhat masochistic. Also, there is something lost listening to music streaming through the internet or watching a show on YouTube rather than actually being there or holding an actual record in your hands.
Kanako: It's really accessible, which is cool. So much crap, equals bad. Learning to do sound on 2" tape machine is something I'm really glad I had an opportunity to do. The approach is more limiting and in turn it makes you have to commit. When I record on a computer, it has endless possibilities and control. The feeling of music can get lost when it is over-produced, and digital pixels will never sound as good to me as the whole analog wave.

MRR: Does Broken Water have an overall goal?
Kanako: Stay together. As long as Mecca Normal if we can. That would be so fucking cool.
Jon: Massive touring, recording.
Abby: Yeah, giving birth to noise babies. Just kidding, but not really.
We will have a tape out by Night People soonish.
Kanako: We play on the East Coast in December and then do the West Coast in February. Or a full US tour depending... Yo, write us if you want us to play in your basement/garage/living room.
www.myspace.com/brokenagua

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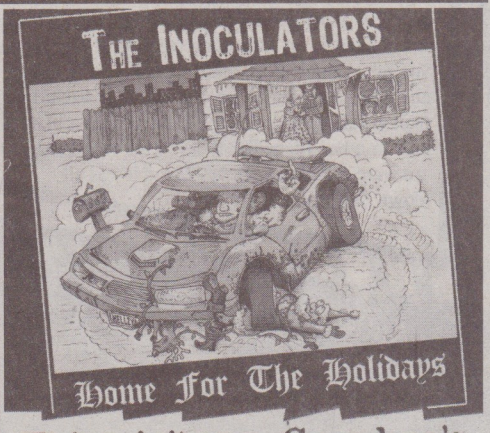

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TRAPPED IN A SCENE:

AN INTERVIEW WITH IAN GLASPER

Following in the steps of Burning Britain *and* The Day the Country Died, *author Ian Glasper has had his third (and final) book documenting UK punk in the '80s published by Cherry Red. Titled* Trapped in a Scene, *(after a Heresy song) it charters the final years of the decade, when the UK scene was penetrated by the sounds and styles of bands in North America, Mainland Europe, and beyond, with much credit due to* Maximum Rocknroll *which played a major part in spreading world wide punk to a generation of disaffected youth still committed to the cause, long after the mainstream press had turned the lights out.*

So yeah, UK bands got harder, faster, tighter (err, okay, Scumdribblerz excepted!) and the result was a hugely energized period of exciting and eclectic bands who carved out a fiercely independent scene, in an era when the despised Thatcher ruled the land, and mass unemployment, strikes, and the nuclear threat were a constant reality. Can you dig it? Ultimately though, soaking up the data in the pages of Trapped... *brought a lot of good/positive memories flooding back from those heady days. And it's a tribute to Ian's coverage of the era that he doesn't just feature the big hitters and "name" outfits, but also gives plenty of space to the small bands that were/are a core of any strong local scene. And, please excuse my blatant localism, but I seriously never (ever) thought I'd be reading hard print about my friends from Vulcan Death Grip, MTA, Salad From Atlantis, and the mighty Immolato Tomatoes in 2009. Awesome shit!*

Intro: Pete Zonked!

Interview by Tim Brooks (San Francisco) and Pete Zonked! (Brighton)

MRR: Let's get right back and start with a little run down of your own history with punk that led you to be coming a punk historian?

Ian: I got into punk in the early '80s, mainly through friends at school. I was fed up of being a swot and wanted in on something rebellious! I worked through all the usual stuff like the Antz and Stranglers and Killing Joke, (all still firm favorites, to this day) and eventually arrived at Crass and Discharge, and there was no going back. Inevitably I taught myself to play bass (easier than a guitar... less strings!) and started a band with my cousin Mobs—we're still in a band together today! This was 1982 or thereabouts, we were called Ammonia 77, and it was all down hill from there.

Anti-Sect

Within a few years I was writing to hundreds of people, trading tapes, hitching about the country to gigs, and doing my own fanzine.

MRR:What was your zine called?

Ian: *Little Things Please Little Minds*—that lasted five or six issues, but got me into putting pen to paper. Everyone did a fanzine back then though, didn't they? It was just another way of expressing yourself. I had a lot of shit to get off my chest, but I was very shy, so it was easier to write it down than scream it from the rooftops.

MRR: What made you start writing these books? Was there always going to be a series? The first was *Burning Britain*, which featured many of the studs and spikes bands, but your own band history is much more metal orientated (Decadence Within/Stampin' Ground). How are the two histories connected?

Ian: The idea for the series didn't really germinate until I was well into the second book, but basically I got fed up of waiting for a decent book on the yobbo punk of the early Eighties. It seemed that a billion words had been written about the Pistols and Sid and the Clash, but nothing—or next to nothing, anyway—about Disorder or Chaos UK. I had earned myself a very modest reputation writing for *Record Collector* and *Terrorizer*, and used that to get my toe in the publishing door. As for my own band history, Decadence Within started off as an out-and-out punk band, but as we progressed musically, and started listening to USHC and thrash metal our sound developed. The attitude and approach never veered from the punk rock path. Stampin' Ground was a lot more

metal, but via the metallic hardcore of Integrity and Cro Mags, and we did eventually get involved in the world of booking agents and management and endorsements, but I always tried to bring something alternative and articulate to the lyrics even then.

During that time I was also in Burnside, which was flat-out tuneful punkcore, and then after Stamping Ground, I did Suicide Watch, which although totally thrash metal in sound was totally punk lyrically and aesthetically. We just gave our second album away for "free" download (well, pay what you like—ie nothing!) on Moshpit Tragedy records. After Stamping Ground I also served time in the reformed Flux Of Pink Indians, which was a killer time too, and obviously very "punk." Punk and metal have also been intertwined—look at the singer of Annihilator playing bass for DOA, or, come to think of it, the drummer of DOA going on to play in Danzig. Napalm Death is a band that spans the gap rather well, too, but there are millions of examples of effective cross-pollination.

MRR: Didn't you work for *Kerrang!* or one of the metal rags? I always felt they were pretty unconnected to the punk scene. Did you feel that in any way? How did that gig come about? What do you do now?

Ian: I wrote a hardcore column for *Terrorizer*, which I started doing in 1993, and I still write for them now. Please don't mention them in the same breath as *Kerrang* though! They are far more grassroots and scene-driven and supportive of all kinds of underground culture. Writing isn't my living though—I'm an operations manager for a fuel distribution company, basically working in transport, doing a lot of Health and Safety and legislation stuff with HGV drivers. Hey, writing about punk rock won't feed my kids! I work pretty long hours, and have two kids who I like to spend quality time with as well as the bands I'm in, and the magazine I contribute to, so sometimes it's near midnight before I settle down to write. And then I'm face down on my keyboard within the hour—that's why this third book took so bleeding long!!

MRR: Did you set out with the idea of an Eighties Trilogy (if you will!) or did that just develop as the project evolved?

Ian: It was only when I was about halfway through the second book that the trilogy idea really cemented in my head—it was too daunting a prospect to think about properly until then!

I knew I wanted to write about all the underground bands of the '80s, and I knew it was too big a thing to do in just one book, unless it was going to be 1000+ pages and cost £30, but I didn't really have the nerve to commit to it until I was already officially halfway there!

MRR: Did you develop a plan of attack for the content? For example Chaos UK could be in the first and the third book…

Ian: I was obviously aware of the crossover between the three volumes—Amebix could have been in either of the first two books, Instigators and AYS could both have been in either volume two or three, But as long as all the important bands got covered in one of the books, I think I can rest easy that I've done the '80s something near proper justice. It *was* a huge venture—seven years in total, and I wasn't twiddling my thumbs thinking about it, I was actively researching and tracking down folk and drafting and editing and interviewing and re-drafting. I felt overawed by it all on more than one occasion.

MRR: How did you decide which bands to include, and which ones not to? Were there any bands who didn't want to be featured?

Ian: I wanted to include every band of note, even if I didn't like them much myself. There were one or two bands I couldn't track down, or that couldn't be bothered to take part—like Poison Girls or the Oppressed, as respective examples, but my mindset was on getting as many bands in as possible. I suppose I made a conscious decision not to include any straight-ahead skinhead bands in *Burning Britain*, (although I *did* include those skinhead bands that really crossed over with the punk crowd), mainly because I'm not an expert on that scene at all, and that book needs to be written by someone who was properly involved with all those bands.

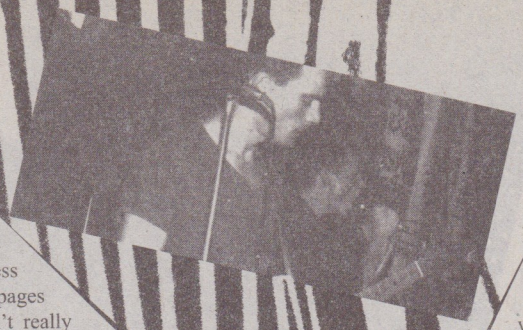
MRR: I remember talking with a mate of mine when *Burning Britain* came out, and we were stoked that someone had actually documented an era of punk that was really important to us but had been rarely acknowledged. We'd been too young to properly experience the '77 explosion, but when the early '80s hit we'd been old enough to finally get involved. Was that a similar experience for you?

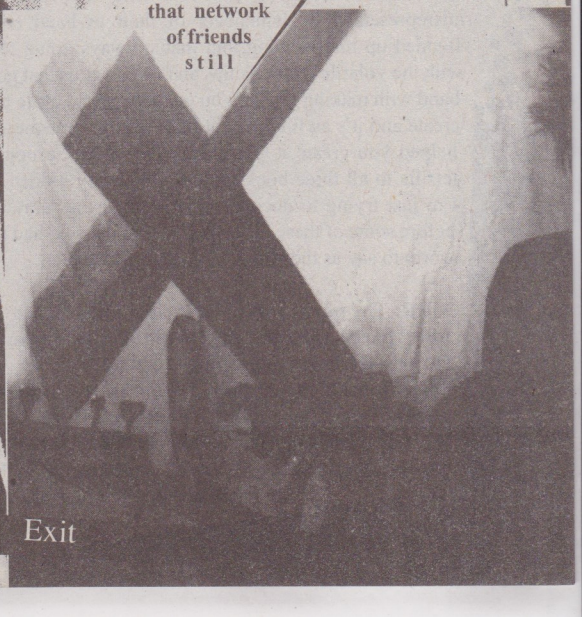
Ian: Absolutely! A lot of the older punks laughed at me and my mates 'cos we didn't "know the score." We dressed badly, couldn't hold our booze, and couldn't get into any of the best gigs! They were still listening to the Stranglers and Damned (both great bands, of course), and I was listening to "immature shit" like Disorder and Varukers. I think everyone defines their punk rock experience as the time when they really got involved, and for me that was 1981 / 1982. Everything prior to that was just something I read about or glimpsed on TV. It was such a vibrant time in underground music and the development of a truly alternative youth culture—and a lot of people got very drunk and did some very stupid things as well! Also, if someone didn't write it down accurately now, I have a feeling a lot of these bands would vanish off the radar forever, and a lot of people would miss out on some cool sounds.

MRR: Reading the book, names came back, faces, places…

Ian: The personalities! Of course, all the great, crazy people like Boff and Ivor the Diver and Hellguts Weird Beard—people who were basically legends before they ever joined bands! And then the music—so diverse, so much going on: thrash metal meets USHC meets anarcho punk meets tripped out reggae dub meets sing-along street punk meets... Well, you get the picture! And then there was the network of friends you alluded to—hundreds of folk trading tapes and soaping stamps and *communicating* without computers and mobile phones!

MRR: Particularly with the anarcho and hardcore books you've reached out to people who were involved in those scenes for information, which must be quite rewarding, knowing that elements of that network of friends still





Exit

Heresy

exists, and in some cases are still very active…

Ian: It's amazing how many people were dragged screaming and kicking from the woodwork for these books, and some of them even felt motivated enough to start up their musical endeavours again, which is kinda crazy to think about, but I'm glad I helped bring some of these old friends back together and get them talking again.

MRR: How did you go about finding all these people to be interviewed? Are there any folks you just couldn't track down? Is there anyone who you wanted to interview but just didn't want to be part of it?

Ian: Lots of phone calls, letters, pondering electoral rolls, pouring over my PC, basic journalistic detective work really! No one turned me down, although a few did need persuading that I didn't have a hidden agenda! There were a few folks I couldn't track down in time: Wattie from Exploited, Vi from Poison Girls, Lee from Infa Riot. Tragically Stig from Icons Of Filth passed away just a month before I was scheduled to meet him; the punk scene lost a truly amazing lyricist there. But thankfully I got most of my wish list as far as interviewees went.

MRR: How did the interviews take place?

Ian: I did a lot of the interviews face-to-face, but obviously a lot had to be done by phone or email. I didn't really meet anyone I didn't get on with, and I met so many influential characters, it's hard to even start listing them, but Steve Ignorant, Penny Rimbaud, Beki Bondage, Peter Test Tube, Colin Abrahall, Dick Lucas, the guys from Discharge and Broken Bones and Conflict and Dirt. I loved every minute of it!

MRR: And for all the positive feedback I can imagine you've received from people in bands that you've covered, have there been any adverse reactions, people pissed off at what was written about them, or maybe because they weren't included?!

Ian: There's usually a few folk who feel they've been misrepresented by whichever of their ex-band colleagues I ended up interviewing, but that's always going to happen, with the volatile relationships and fragile egos that go hand-in-hand with making music. You get very (very) close to what you create and it's awful to see it belittled by someone—who often helped you create it—in print. Overall the response has been terrific to all three books. I don't have any hidden agenda here, I'm just trying to document the scene as accurately as possible before some of these more obscure bands, who had just as much of worth to say as the "bigger" ones, are forgotten.

MRR: The part I was most excited about is the "where are they now" parts. You can't dig that info up on the internet. Were you surprised where people had ended up?

Ian: It sometimes surprised me, but twenty years is a long time, and a lot of water runs under the bridge. It's surprising really, but most of them are still punk in some way or another, if only in general attitude—most ex-punks still have a healthy mistrust of authority etc. You might stop spiking your hair up (mainly 'cos we lose it!), but it's hard to walk away from all those ideals, unless you were faking it in the first place, of course. Thankfully, most of the people I've spoken to for the books cared about it then, and still care about it—to a greater or lesser extent—even now…

MRR: From a socio-economic standpoint of punk, a lot of those bands sang about working class issues and unemployment. What are some of the jobs that these people work in today? Are most of the guys that were in these bands predominantly working class or did they move onto upper class jobs? The punk scene in England in 1982 seems miles different from the DIY scene today, so how did most of these people end up? How many became cops, lawyers, politicians, garbagemen, plumbers, etc?

Ian: There's a few cops and lawyers, even a well-to-do antiques dealer and a priest, but there's also a few organic vegetable gardeners and drug counselors and social workers. Some of these people were just passing through the punk scene, and it entertained them for a short while before they moved on—and good luck to them if they couldn't find what they were looking for—whilst some of us have been stuck here ever since.

MRR:
All of the books are really comprehensive, and you must have covered bands that you didn't like. Was it hard to muster up enthusiasm for those bands?
Ian: No, not really, I only sat down to iron out their chapters when I was feeling up for it, and I try to keep the thought in my mind that the scene was bigger than any one single band, it was shaped by everybody, not just the bands *I* liked! The hardest thing to drum up enthusiasm for was transcribing some of the huge taped interviews ready for editing—that definitely became a chore. Some of those interviews were four or five hours long! And took twice as long to type up!

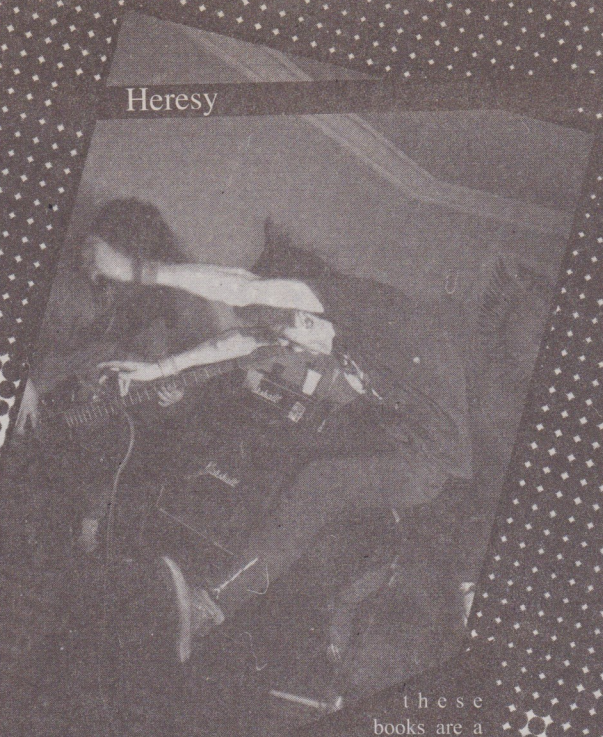
MRR: Which of the three "scenes" (if you can generalize like that) do you feel closest too? I know that Decadence Within were everywhere during the later part of the '80s?
Ian: Yes, Decadence Within were like a bad rash, weren't they? I got fed up of reading interviews with us myself in the end! You've surmised correctly though, I probably do feel closest to the late '80s book than the first two, just because my own band was so busy in that period and interacting with all the other bands on a social level. Having said that, we did a lot of gigs with bands from the first two books too, like the Samples, the Instigators and Subhumans.

MRR: Taking the latest books title from Heresy's famous lament on the clear limitations they came to experience during those halcyon hardcore days, ("Is this Alternative? Alternative in name only / Role plays the same with a new adopted name") you seem keen to get across the (balanced) point that as the '80s progressed some bands were garnering big followings, moving away from their punk roots, with options for a more commercial (dare I say it) crossover, and that caused a negative reaction in certain quarters… friendships were often tested, or broken…
Ian: Yeah, Decadence Within even experienced it a bit, and we were total small fry compared to the likes of Napalm and Heresy, so they must have really felt it. We copped all sorts of flak for appearing in *Metal Forces* and stuff, which seemed really weird, because we had a very positive message and we just wanted to communicate it to as many people as possible. I've never bought into that introspective scene mentality. You *can* expand your horizons without selling out your principles!

MRR: Do you think it's fair to say that the period covered in *Trapped...* was also the point that punk in the UK started to split off into specific sub genres, which developed their own more and more insular scenes, and that's carried on to this day? I particularly remember as 1989 progressed going to gigs in (my hometown) Brighton and the crowds becoming more and more divided; thrashers, anarcho/crusties, hardcore kids, skaters, punks, straight edgers...
Ian: Well, it's an interesting theory, mate! It did suddenly fragment, didn't it? In many ways, it *was* the beginning of the end as far as a united punk underground went, but I think that's human nature, to carve things up and try to keep the best for ourselves. The punk scene was no different, as much as we liked to kid ourselves that it was... at least with age and hindsight, we transcend some of that silliness. The annual Rebellion festival is a fantastic example of how the clans can co-exist harmoniously once again

MRR: Did your view of punk history change after interviewing all these different folk? For example how differently were bands treated by labels from the UK82 bands through to the UKHC bands of the late '80s? Punk was huge in the early '80s, but became very underground later.
Ian: Yeah, punk was huge in the early '80s—bands were topping the independent charts, and even making the Top Thirty of the national charts, back when you had to shift serious numbers to qualify. I daresay there were some hefty advances being proffered back then when bands like Exploited and GBH were looking for new labels—those advances no doubt diminished over the years alongside the sales figures. The label No Future was based very near to where I lived, and we'd pop in there to pick up their singles as they were released, and bands like Blitz who had solid crossover appeal were incredibly popular. The thought of a punk band selling 50,000 singles these days is absurd, but back then was commonplace. Uh, but to answer your question, no, my view of punk history didn't really change as a result of the interviews!

MRR: How did you hook up with Cherry Red? How much are they involved in the process? Will there be later versions of the book with additions? I'd love to see record covers, shirts and shit in there too….
Ian: I figured Cherry Red might be interested in *Burning Britain* because they'd reissued a lot of the bands that were in the book on CD, so I approached them and they were very supportive and encouraging, and the relationship grew from there. They basically trust me enough now to allow me almost total creative control, and I have a huge say in every aspect of the final product, which means far more to me than a big advance or anything. First and foremost


Heresy

these books are a labor of love, and Cherry Red shared my enthusiasm for the genre.

MRR: Do you have a lot of stuff that didn't make it into the books? Would you ever do something that was more graphic with record covers, more photos etc?
Ian: There were a lot more photos that we could maybe have got in if we'd cut the word counts down, but both myself and Cherry Red wanted *all* the text in there. It would have been nice to have included record sleeves and everything too, but the books would have gotten so big and so expensive. It's a balancing act really; what's the point of producing such a lavish book if no one can afford to own it? I'm trying to strike a happy medium, and I think we came pretty close with the latest volume...

MRR: Were there bands that almost made it in, but didn't quite fit the criteria? Were there bands you would have liked to have covered, but figured they were outside the boundaries of the books? How did you decide what bands stayed, and which went. For example you cover bands like the Skumdribblerz who never released anything, but omitted other demo only bands.
Ian: The Skumdribblerz made it in, despite never releasing anything, because they were so pivotal in the creation of a vital Nottingham scene and an integral part of the national scene as a whole—you couldn't *not* see them somewhere if you were a regular gig-goer! A lot of the bigger bands cited them as an influence too, so they obviously made their mark. To be honest, I was never going to get *every* band in, was I? But I did my best to get all the really important names in there, and a good representative cross-section of the rest...

MRR: Do you have any idea why some bands decided not to be part of it? Are there bands who didn't want to do it that you really wished were in it? Was there any stuff that you got turned up after the books were finished that you wished had made it in??

Leeds Stop the City, 9 August 1984

I can recall that actually declined to take part was the Oppressed. Roddy just couldn't be arsed with it, which is fair enough—actually the guy from the Underdogs couldn't be bothered either. Any other bands missing were omitted because I couldn't get hold of them, or they couldn't get their arses in gear to answer my questions in time or whatever. As regards stuff turning up when the books were finished, I really wanted to include Revulsion in the latest book, and I just had a mail back from one of them as the book went to press!

MRR: What happened to the bands you were in (Stampin' Ground) and the label you ran (Blackfish)?

Ian: Stampin' Ground just got too big for me and I left, mainly 'cos they wanted to tour all of the time, and I wanted to watch my kids grow up. I played a major part in writing and recording all four albums though, and I only missed out on the last two years which they mainly spent sat in buses waiting for Anthrax or Arch Enemy to finish sound-checking! I bowed out right after we supported Iron Maiden at Castle Donnington in 2003. I figured that was about as big as it was going to get! Blackfish folded soon after I left Stampin' Ground, 'cos I mainly used to work with bands we'd meet on tour, and then being on tour was a great place to sell their CDs, and without the band that whole network sort of stalled for me, and I ran out of money to sink into it anyway.

MRR: But I read you are regrouping with some former members of Stampin' Ground in a new outfit Betrayed By Many.

Ian: It's me, Mobs and Ade from Stampin' Ground, who were the three song-writers in that band, plus Dan Philp from Pointdown and Jim from Seventh Cross. We're recording a demo right now, and we have our first show booked for December, in Athens, of all places!

MRR: And, as mentioned, you joined Flux of Pink Indians a couple of years ago to play bass for a few gigs, which, on a personal level must have been pretty awesome!

Ian: It *was* indeed pretty awesome! I learnt to play bass plonking along to "Tube Disasters," and absolutely loved their early Eighties material, so to spend some time playing my favorite tunes with the guys that wrote them was brilliant! We only did the four gigs though—Steve's *Feeding...* show, the 1 in 12, one in Dijon, and one with the Subhumans in Islington, and that's yer lot. Colsk isn't interested in a full-time resurrection. There should be a live DVD from the aforementioned gigs surfacing sometime soon though, as a little keepsake of the reunion.

MRR: I know that you are doing a compilation called *Trapped in a Scene* to accompany the third book, any plans for more of those?

Ian: Well, the DVDs that accompanied the first two books weren't really my babies, although Roy Wallace did a cracking job of the one he did for the Anarcho book. This time I wanted to be a bit more hands-on, and I compiled a 32-track compilation CD myself, which is a mixture of classic tracks and rare/unreleased stuff, much of it salvaged from some very vulnerable original source formats, by some of the leading lights of that period. I crammed a few photos that never made the book into the packaging and it turned out pretty neat, even if I do say so myself! I'll definitely do one to go with the next book too—probably a double-CD this time.Watch this space!

MRR: Having immersed yourself in so much old music, are you still able to keep abreast of new bands? Who's got you excited at the moment?

Ian: Mmm, I've not got my finger on the pulse the way I used to have but recently I've been blown away by Biafra's new band, the Guantanamo Bay School of Medicine. I also like Cross Stitched Eyes, War/System, Bad Samaritans, Your Demise, Rumplestiltskin Grinder... all sorts of shit really

MRR: C'mon then Ian, if any one can, you definitely can—let's have your Top Ten Eighties UK Punk records. Drum roll… please…

Ian: In no particular order, and based on sheer number of plays over the years:

Rudimentary Peni—*Death Church*
Anti-Pasti—*The Last Cal'*
Icons Of Filth—*Onward Christian Soldiers*
Chron Gen—*Chron Gen*
Omega Tribe —*Angry Songs*
GBH—*City Baby Attacked By Rats*
Conflict—*Increase The Pressure*
Discharge—*Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing*
Broken Bones—*Dem Bones*
The Mob—*Let The Tribe Increase*
The Exploited—*Troops Of Tomorrow*
Crass—*Stations Of The Crass*

Yes, I know that's twelve... ten is just impossible! Ha!

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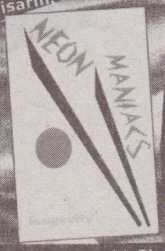

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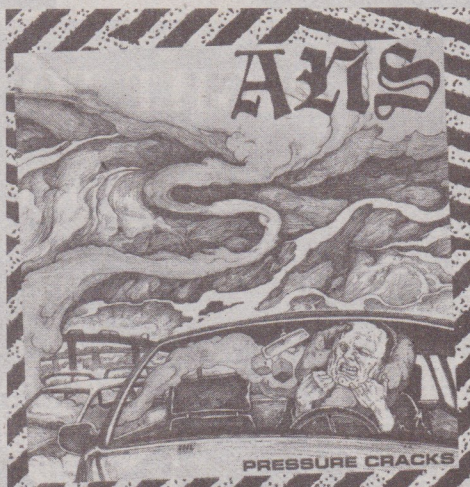

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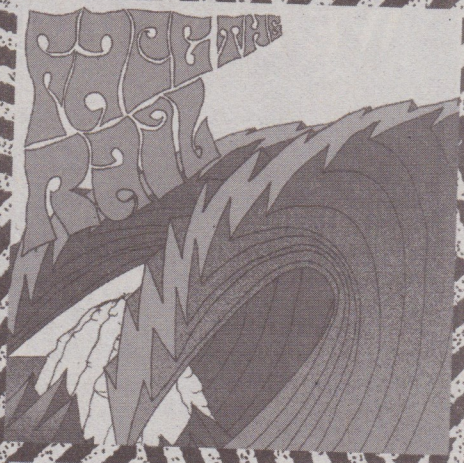

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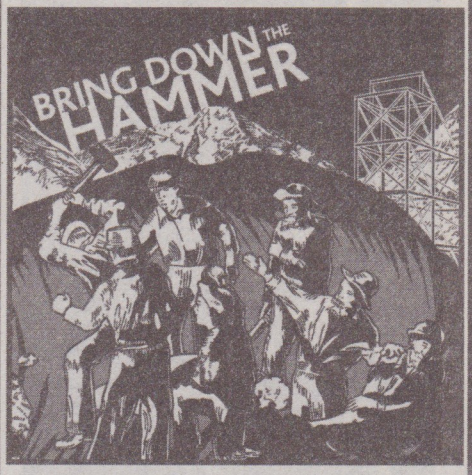

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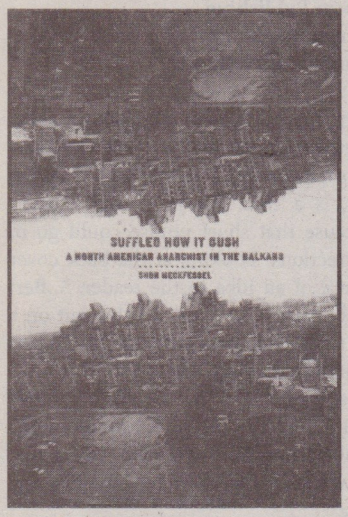


Suffled How it Gush: a North American in the Balkans
Shon Meckfessel
260 pages • $16.95
AK Press
www.akpress.org

Shon Meckfessel takes on quite a quest, traveling throughout the Balkans in the early-to-mid 2000s and documenting it all in his book, *Suffled How It Gush: a North American Anarchist in the Balkans*. Meckfessel visits eleven countries within this Southeast European region, giving an anarchist, anti-nationalistic perspective on territories that are rife with unrest. The result is a book that, although perhaps biting off more than it can chew, sheds light on topics of freedom and security, government influence and quality of life, and the meaning and outcomes of nation-states within a multi-faceted but narrowly-discussed area of the world.

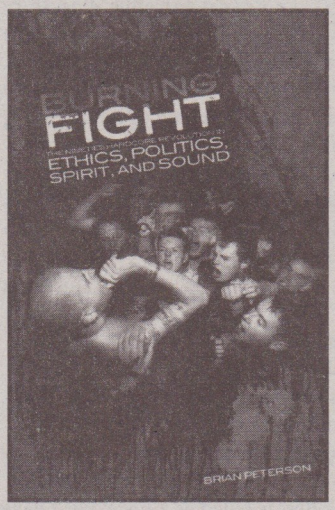
The Balkans include several countries within the Balkan peninsula, which is topped by the Balkan mountains, plus neighboring countries including Croatia, Slovenia, and Romania. The area is a hotbed of ethnic turmoil, with different sects of religion, class, and nationality living in close quarters within relatively new nation-states. Much has been written about the Balkans, with focus on the post-Yugoslavian area, and Meckfessel's book adds a new perspective within the canon of historical Balkan literature. Meckfessel describes the lesser-seen and lesser-reported parts of the Balkans by talking to common citizens and other punks and anarchists, whose viewpoints differ wildly from official reporting, and even each other.

Meckfessel's book is non-linear, composed of vignettes of his travels throughout the various countries. His time is greatly spent within hostels, stranger's homes, and trains, affording a genuine look at the people that comprise the Balkans. He talks with local bar patrons, protestors, and old and new friends, using his extensive knowledge of the Balkans to ask pertinent questions on the meanings of identity, freedom, and history. This makes up the core of the book, which is driven by a desire to report on the real lives of people living in war-torn and post-war regions. Meckfessel beautifully describes the landscapes, cultures, and people he encounters, unearthing charm and character in an area that is hardly ever expressed as so.

Initially intended as a video documentary, Meckfessel abandons his camera and takes to the pen. This sentiment manifests itself in a lack of cohesion within the narrative, with points of interest touched upon but then abandoned, encompassing the struggle of one person taking on an area of the world that is difficult to encapsulate within one book. This creates a feeling of tension, an anti-climactic response that results in a lack of proper context. At times Mechfessel's retelling of the history of the Balkans includes a plethora of dates, statistical numbers, and names, so much so that it overwhelms rather than informs. If these facts were presented in a way that built towards a more conclusive narrative, then perhaps they would become more concrete instead of ephemeral, fading into the background as he moves on through the Balkans. It becomes a book that is difficult to read through quickly, and unfortunately one that leaves much to forget from the necessary pauses.

Part travelogue, part journalistic foray, and part personal story, Mechfessel's book is impressive and interesting, offering a honest and earthly look at a part of the world that is generally presented either in caricature or weighed down with lengthy history. Much insight is taken from the conversations he has with the people of the Balkans and the interactions he is witness to, illuminating the many realities that exist within there, but are never told.

—Krista Ciminera



Burning Fight: The Nineties Hardcore Revolution in Ethics, Politics, Spirit, and Sound
Brian Peterson
500pgs • $18 US/$24 Canada
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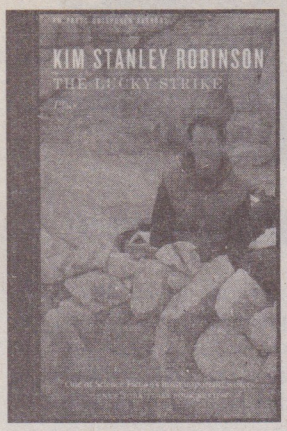
RevHQ.com

It's really funny to me to see a book like this come out, since through the first half of the '00s no one had anything good to say about '90s hardcore, then all of the sudden people were interested again. Typical, cyclical trend bullshit. Strange to me also, to see published recollections of things I personally witnessed, like Race Traitor's episode during Torches To Rome's set at the Greenville, NC fest in '96 (or whenever that was that I skipped school to drive 24 hours to a fest that every band that I went to see, besides Seein' Red, cancelled).

Needless to say, the title of this book isn't just a clever play on words. The '90s really were a special time in underground music. The '90s were to political hardcore what the '60s were to the hippies. People broke away from the traditions and looked more at the self and things like "what can *I* do to help the scene, my community, or the world at large?" types of issues. That is not to say that politics wasn't always an inherent part of punk and hardcore, but towards the late '80s such things were so passé and thrown (mostly) to the wayside for unity songs, and stabbed-me-in-the-back-and-now-you're-gonna-pay-type bullshit. Not only was there an ethical resurgence, but the sounds that were happening were like nothing anyone had ever done. Bands like Burn, Groundwork, Endpoint, Inside Out, Quicksand, Integrity, etc. were all going on, and there hasn't been a musical breakthrough in punk pretty much since then. Folks were just doing their own thing and everyone was stoked on it.

Burning Fight looks back on all that with many of the players from the era—some glowing about how great it was, while others, not so much —in two ways. The first half is more people's feelings and anecdotes on certain issues or events, like religion in hardcore, straightedge, feminism, animal rights, and hardline, among others. The second half is interviews with members of bands like those mentioned above (minus Quicksand) and others, like Mouthpiece, Deadguy, Strife, Ressurection, Spitboy, Los Crudos, and more. At first, I found this drivel laughable, then I felt nostalgic, and at the end I felt this book did a pretty thorough, though by no means definitive, job of covering most of the major concerns of American hardcore in the 1990s, and for those of us that were there, it's like looking at a high school yearbook and all the wacky things that went on.

—Justin



The Lucky Strike
Kim Stanley Robinson
123 pages • $12
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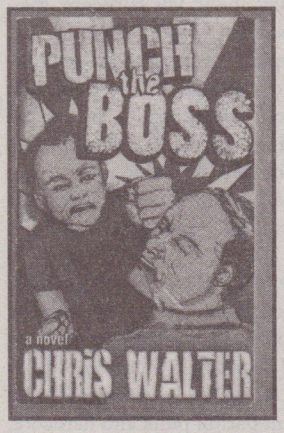
The Lucky Strike is what you would call speculative fiction—this is what we science fiction nerds call it so that norms will be more likely to read the books. This isn't some outer-space future book (although Robinson has written a really good, heavy on the science, light on the sexy alien overlords, trilogy about terraforming Mars) but rather a look back at the bombing of Hiroshima and what could have happened if the pilot had missed as an act of protest. *The Lucky Strike* is a riveting short story about men in World War II and what the ramifications of Hiroshima were and could have been. It stands alone as a good read, but accompanied by *A Sensitive Dependence on Initial Conditions*, which is an intense story/lecture that touches on almost every possible outcome of bombing or not bombing Hiroshima and the historical and scientific theories behind each. It's way more interesting than that sounds, and has a repetitive and incantatory quality that leaves the reader feeling haunted by all the possible outcomes of any event ever. There's also an interview with Robinson, who is a "green socialist" and lives in an intentional community.

—Thera



Punch The Boss
Chris Walter
223 pages • $16
www.punkbooks.com
www.myspace.com/gfy_press

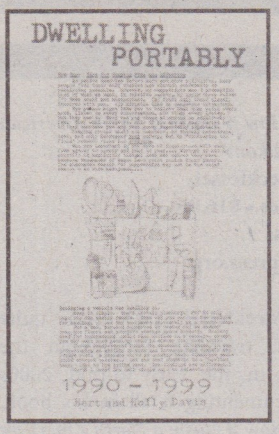
Punch The Boss is billed as a novel but I have a feeling it is yet still more autobiographical mayhem from Chris Walter. Some names and locations have been changed to protect the (very very) guilty but after reading his fourteen(!) previous books I know better than to think this is complete fiction.

The first-person narration comes from Cary, the books' '70s-era teenage protagonist (or, more accurately, antagonist). As a Canadian latchkey dropout he gets his first job as a short order cook. Themes of alienation and under-achieving start strong and only increase throughout the book. By job-firing number three (out of a possible three) Cary openly proclaims himself "lazy, selfish, indifferent, and apathetic. [He] hated most people, had a limited attention span, was preoccupied with sex, drank too much, gambled, had a terrible attitude, resented authority, disliked following orders, abused substances, couldn't handle money, was usually late for appointments, masturbated constantly, lied, stole, cheated, and had impossibly smelly feet." All of these traits are chronicled with at least one anecdote and offer much insight to the POV of his writing.

Somewhere in the middle of the hired-fired-collect-unemployment-rinse-repeat cycle a new subculture called punk rock sprouts up in Winnipeg and, like a gun to a bullet, provides Cary with an ideological blueprint to destruction. After many attempts to piss in the coffee of each and every authority figure he encounters, Cary eventually finds steady work as a construction worker. This work subsidizes what ultimately becomes Cary's passion: zine writing. "I liked the idea of my words sitting there on the paper waiting to punch readers in the eye." Now, 30 years later, Chris, er, Cary writes books for a living and hopes none sof his poorly paid assistants piss in *his* coffee.

Walter's style has not changed, but his skills as a storyteller get stronger with each passing book. This is a quick read, and can be related to by anyone who has ever had to answer to an unworthy higher-up. However, after reading *Wrong* (Walter's previous book, which was a bona fide 'thriller') I am more excited to see of what other literary rabble-rousing he is capable.

—Craigums



Dwelling Portably
Bert and Holly Davis
168 pages • $8
Microcosm Publishing
222 S Rogers Street
Bloomington, IN 47404

Removing this book from the packing, I was a bit confused as to what subject was truly being written about. Yes, the title, *Dwelling Portably*, is a clue, but it is only a small clue because that short phrase could go in many directions. Looking at the back cover gives more of an idea to the reader, "...Bert and Holly have been cranking this out on a manual typewriter in their yurt. You'll find diagrams and notes on how to make portable showers, find seasonal jobs..." After a few seconds it began to sink in and I realized that *Dwelling Portably* was clearly about living off the grid. As I delved into the book I soon came to realize that my assumption as to the subject was far too simple. To say that the subject is simply living off the grid would be a gross understatement and a disservice to this densely packed book.

The authors/compilers/editors Bert and Holly Davis have lived a nomadic life in the Northwest US for the past 30 years. During this time they compiled detailed notes on their survivalist lifestyle and released a zine, first called *Message Post* and later *Dwelling Portably*. This book compiles their writing and submissions from others from between the years of 1990-1999. While some of the writing is from Bert and Holly, it seems that most of the writing has been submitted from readers of the zine that live a somewhat similar lifestyle to the publishers of *Dwelling Portably*.

As I stated, from an overly simplistic view, this book is mostly a guide to living off the grid. If you expand from there, you see that the tips being given in this book can be used from anyone from the hardcore survivalist to the urban apartment dweller looking to live a little more cheaply and simply. In these pages one can learn about how to drop out of modern society, whether partially or completely. Among the tips offered is advice on bathing, eating, energy, pest prevention, home schooling, waterproofing of dwellings, traveling lightly and effectively. The reader will also get tips on living in cars, tents, yurts, straw bale structures, tipi's, lean-to's, and just about any structure that one can think of. Each submission is written in a simple and easy to follow manner. Also included in many of the submissions are diagrams to help in understanding the workings of more detailed endeavors. To sum it up, with a little effort, some time, and some simple supplies someone could use this book as "how to" for simple, easy, and back to basics living without interference from 90% of the modern world.

The folks that submit the pieces that are published here seem to range from backpackers who like to travel light to hardcore survivalists that view the US government as an enemy to be avoided at all costs. If one keeps an open mind when reading this book and avoids making judgment as to the lifestyle of the authors or submitters anyone from the weekend camper to the person looking to "disappear" and live a nomadic life will come away with some type of knowledge after reading this book.

The only negative I can find with *Dwelling Portably* is that its layout and cover seem to assume that the reader has sought the book ought and not the other way around. I understand that the publisher and editors want to keep things simple and pack the most information into the smallest package, but the casual browser might pass a book like this up, and that would be unfortunate.

—Trent Reinsmith

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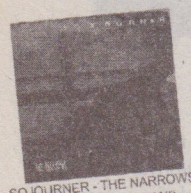

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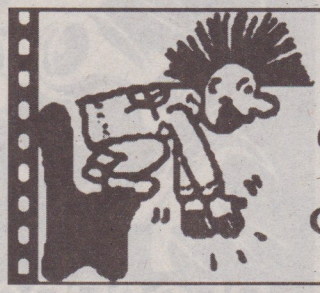


BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

MESSIN' WITH THE KID

Growing up in Boston in the '70s and '80s the local music scene had a mythical quality to me. I didn't think about it as such at the time. I just thought there were so many great and (I thought) really famous bands in Boston. None was more legendary than the Remains. Although they broke up years before I was born, The Real Kids sang how "it don't seem the same without the Remains" in their song "Better Be Good." The Real Kids meant it as a put down of people who weren't into the at the time current '70s Boston music scene, but it still made me wonder. What was it about the Remains?

America's Lost Band: Barry and The Remains explores the surprisingly short and overlooked career of the band as well as their reformation in the '00s. The band should have been popular, but they never really broke out of the Boston area. Some speculate that perhaps they called it quits too soon.

The Remains formed in 1964 at Boston University. They wrote catchy garage pop songs and were soon packing them in at the Rathskeller in Kenmore Square. They released successful local singles for Epic Records. That popularity earned them television appearances on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *Hullabaloo*. Then their seemingly biggest opportunity came as the opening band for the Beatles' 1966 tour. After the tour, and before the release of their debut LP, the Remains broke up.

The most disappointing thing about **America's Lost Band: Barry and The Remains** is that lead singer Barry Tashian's diary kept during the Beatles tour is the most interesting part of the documentary. Tashian recalls that his father encouraged him to write the diary. Tashian reads from it while footage of the tour is shown. Of course, the footage that is mostly available is of the Beatles. The majority of what Tashian writes is about the Beatles too. Not everyone gets to tour with the Beatles, so I am sure it was pretty exciting. If you're a Beatles' fan this inside information is probably amazing. But if you want to see a documentary about the Remains then it is a bit underwhelming. Plus there isn't much to the film leading up to the Beatles tour either.

When the older Remains gather forty years later at Dodger's Stadium to recall playing there it is a bit more interesting. They remember watching the show from the dugout. They feel lucky that they were the first band on the bill. When they started to play people were really excited and screamed for them like they were the Beatles. The next two acts didn't get such good treatment since people were starting to get tired of waiting for the Beatles to come out.

Drummer Chip Damiani didn't go on the Beatles tour deciding that he preferred that people pay attention to the Remains for their own music. He knew that wouldn't happen if they played with the Beatles. When asked if he regretted it, he half-jokingly says that what he regrets is always being asked that question. If he had done the tour he wouldn't have to answer that one question. Even today he doesn't regret it. Tashian feels that Damiani not going on the tour was what broke the Remains up. The replacement drummer just wasn't the same.

As is usually the case the majority of **America's Lost Band: Barry and The Remains** focuses on the band's reformation. There is a lot of footage of that. The band plays at Amoeba Records in LA and performs some festival and club shows. The Remains appear to be enjoying themselves. Plus they maintain a sensible attitude that now the pressure is off and they can just play for fun. (www.theremains.com)

The Australians seem to have taken the idea behind my favorite guilty pleasure DVD series "Under Review" and have done it the real way. **Great Australian Albums: The Saints (I'm) Stranded** sets up the scene for the recording of the Saints seminal debut album. Interestingly the people responsible for the documentary manage to interview the two main Saints: singer Chris Bailey and guitarist Ed Keupper as well as album producer Rod Coe. That would seem an impossibility to anyone at "Under Review." There are also interviews with Rob Younger of Radio Birdman, Nick Cave of the Birthday Party, Robert Forster of the Go-Betweens, Iain Shedden of the Jolt (who would later play drums in the Saints), and many other Australian musicians who were influenced by the Saints when they first started. Interviewing this many people actually involved or present at the time really adds to the authenticity of the story.

Bailey and Keupper met in high school during a detention. Bailey was the bad kid always getting into trouble. Keupper was a straight A student who had a rebellious tendency. The two bonded over music and started the band. Both are very open about the band and what happened during the time recording the album. Bailey now sort of resembles Bono and is as arrogant, but apparently he was back then as well. Unfortunately, bass player Kym Bradshaw and drummer Ivor Hay are not interviewed. Instead Bailey describes them, stating they may not "technically be the world's best rhythm section." He gives them a few backhanded comments as well.

The band formed in Brisbane, Australia amid some political unrest under the government of Sir Joh Bjelke Petersen, the Queensland Premier. People are shown being arrested in the streets. Police harassment was rampant. The band rented halls to put on their own shows. Then they self-released their first record. The record is chosen by *Sounds* in England as the single of the year. Bailey sarcastically recalls, "How bloody fabulous."

The highlight of **Great Australian Albums: The Saints (I'm) Stranded** is the live footage of the band. Almost every song from the album is shown being performed at an amazing show at Paddington Town Hall. The footage and the sound is excellent. During "Nights In Venice" Chris Bailey sits on the floor in front of the stage. People are dancing wildly around him. He slyly glares into the camera that is close up on his face. The song ends and he walks through the crowd toward the back. There are also some other great live performances and their appearance on *Top Of the Pops*, as well as some cool clips of Radio Birdman. Ideally all these live performances would have been shown in their entirety as a DVD extra, but they are not.

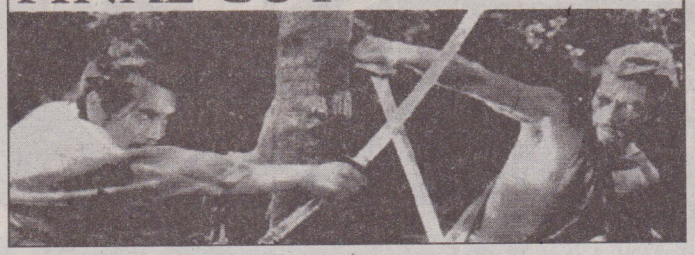
There is also an interview with the band at the time of the first record. They are cute and humble, probably still astonished at what was happening. They joke about pressing 500 singles and sending off 400 of them to the press. Later when Bailey is interviewed in London he has a bit more disdain for what is going on in the punk scene. Fortunately **Great Australian Albums: The Saints (I'm) Stranded** ends with the Saints moving to England, wisely choosing to stay focused only on the one album.

The Saints' *(I'm) Stranded* has always been one of my favorite albums. Yet, after watching **Great Australian Albums: The Saints (I'm) Stranded** it was as if I just discovered it. I wanted to listen to it over and over again. I can't stop. (www.myspace.com/greataustralianalbums)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy

to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



ONE DECADE OF MOVIES

It seems half the world is paved "Top Ten" lists, but even in spite of this, they're awfully hard to resist. But with *MRR* movies, things are a little more complicated.

The ideal, of course, would be to concentrate on punk movies. The reality is that there aren't that many punk movies, and the ones that are left aren't necessarily good. Occasionally, features will include the likes of the Ramones or Pistols, but it seems that punk is still underground in a lot of ways.

To help make up for the dearth of ace material, documentaries can be a great help. They're comparatively low budget, under-promoted, and (at their best) complement the issues *MRR* fans generally find interesting. As a last resort, there are always lots of good foreign films to choose from.

In making a Best of Decade list, then, it's not so much an issue of hauling out the very best features; there are too many of those lists already. My idea of a good Top Ten would include great films that you may not have been turned on to yet. And if you haven't, look no further.

In the first category, comprised of punk-oriented films, two documentaries stand above the rest. Jim Fields and Michael Gramaglia directed **The End of the Century** (2003)— unquestionably the definitive document on the history of the Ramones; it includes funny and revealing moments from their early live gigs in New York, giving you a feeling for how emotionally explosive one of their gigs could be. Joey is no longer with us, of course, but after watching this film, we begin to appreciate the painful, real-life "daytime dilemma" that tore apart his personal life. **The End of the Century** is by no means a definitive or complete biography of punk's greatest band, but you can't help but understand their personalities more intimately after you look past their public image.

Crossing the ocean, it would be hard not to be impressed by Julien Temple's polished documentary, **The Filth and the Fury** (2000). Temple directed *The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle*, itself engaging and fun. The interviews include a variety of British rock luminaries, but the chance to hear the voices of the actual band members (minus Sid) being interviewed gives dimension to the band's mythic history. When John Lydon explains his lyrics, you begin to realize what a careful writer he is, and how protective he was of his hapless friend, Sid Vicious. Lydon is the one person here who best articulates the band's ultimate tragedy. This is an arresting film, whether or not you're a Pistols fan.

It's likely that the story of post-punk icons Joy Division would have made a less than satisfactory documentary. However, director Anton Corbijn (who dabbled in the careers of Depeche Mode and U2) transcends the subject matter with a brilliant fictional adaptation. **Control** (2007) outlines the meteoric career of vocalist Ian Curtis (Sam Riley) as he tries to grapple with depression, his young marriage, and a no-future office job. Photographed in black and white, this film has the same visual mood as Joy Division's *Closer* album. While I've never been a fan of all of Joy Division's music, the emotional punch of the denouement is shattering.

Next, we have a set of documentaries notable for their unwillingness to fold to political or social consensus, but still managing to be as riveting as any narrative fiction film.

The Aileen Wuomos story has been told before, but Nick Broomfield—who also directed *Kurt & Courtney* (which includes a classic interview sequence with late El Duce of the Mentors)—does a definitive job with his second treatment of the Wuomos trial. Wuomos was mentally ill, a victim of sexual violence, and herself an admitted killer, and passionate that she, a woman, should receive the death penalty. Both tough and ingratiating, Nick Broomfield has always found a way into the personal lives of his subjects, and here, he actually participates in the trial proceedings. This allows the film viewer to view American justice from every angle, and experience the inequities of a system that offers no hope of mercy. **Aileen: The Life and Death of a Serial Killer** (2003) is vastly more accurate and affecting than *Monster*, the 2003 drama (with Charlize Theron and Christina Ricci) based on the same incident.

The Corporation (2003), directed by Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbott, was the same team behind *Manufacturing Consent*, the acclaimed documentary on Noam Chomsky. But **The Corporation** is even more ambitious (and just as long)—the story of how an abstract legal idea took on a life of its own. Now, the corporation has expanded beyond anyone's 19th century expectations into a force that threatens to steamroll the people it's meant to serve. This documentary humanizes its story with humor and intelligence.

Conservative critics have been trying, with only mincing success, to downplay the success and influence of Davis Guggenheim's **An Inconvenient Truth** (2006). Narrated by former Vice President Al Gore from his popular lecture presentation, this film contains interviews, CGI animation, and nightmarish statistics to bolster the case of global warming—or at least climate change. Politics frequently works against the commercial prospects of documentaries, pitching its message to the already convinced; here, a progressive agenda melds with a nightmare vision reminiscent of Roland Emmerich's disaster fantasy, *The Day After Tomorrow*. If even half of **An Inconvenient Truth** turns out to be right, the film would still be frightening.

With **The Fog of War** (2003), the political message is every bit as pointed. Director Errol Morris (*Gates of Heaven*, *The Thin Blue Line*) has directed a series of superior documentaries, but when he addresses the late-life biography of Robert McNamara, secretary of defense during the Vietnam years, he admits small-minded blunders as he tried, and failed, to make a success of Lyndon Johnson's foreign policy. Now in his '80s, he acknowledges his accomplishments and mistakes, and gives us a longitudinal portrait that's hard to forget.

A few foreign films have shown themselves to be on a par with the best domestic product. Alejandro González Iñárritu hit one out of the park with Mexico's **Amores Perros** (2000), an interleaved story of poverty and social inequity in the country's predatory underground. This has the same kind of narrative structure as *Pulp Fiction* but **Amores Perros** is actually about something; it has real weight. Its tension held with a series of interrelated stories that span the breadth of Mexico.

Japan's **Eureka** (2000) is equally impressive, in a different way. After a bus hijacking results in a grisly body count, director Shinji Aoyama shifts his characters away from urban terror to a visually stunning meditation on the meaning of violence. Spearheaded by the acting of Koji Yakusho (*Cure*, *Shall We Dance*, *Bounce KoGals*, etc.), the ensuing narrative is not unlike a road movie, lasting over two and a half hours. I wouldn't be the first viewer to note that it seemed to be over in a heartbeat.

Finally, Danis Tanovic's **No Man's Land** (2001) is a multi-award winning satire on the withering war of attrition between Bosnia and Herzegovina. The masterful dramatic irony here soon makes you realize that, regardless of combatants, each side is desperately dependent on the opposition. The cast of characters is so grounded and realistic that you feel drawn into the conflict in spite of yourself.

If anything the mainstream, "critically acclaimed" films from the past ten years were almost routinely outshined by nearly all of the titles here. Now is as good a time as any to visit your video shop and make some timely discoveries.

The End of the Century (2003)
The Filth and the Fury (2000)
Control (2007)
Aileen: The Life and Death of a Serial Killer (2003)
The Corporation (2003)
An Inconvenient Truth (2006)
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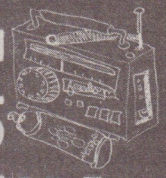

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A BIT OF BRAINDEAD – "Totally Wrecked"

Above-average political youth crew that throws in plenty of blast-beats and solos for the first half, and then settles into more straightforward hardcore territory on the second side. This band knows how to work well with the formula and the better stock riffs, without resorting to gimmicks or beating anything into the ground. The vocals are of the VITAMIN X or WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? persuasion, the drums are nice and poppy and fit this sound great, and everything is played tightly. I'm going to Europe in a few months, and hopefully I can catch them live while I'm there! (DG)
(Rising Riot / Yellow Dog / Thrashbastard)

ABORTTI 13 – "Viimeinen Verilöyly" EP

The band promises that this EP finally commits the remaining songs of ABORTTI 13 to vinyl. Originally written in 1983, this features two original members of the band, as well as a clutch of medium- to fast-speed, a-melodic punk tunes. Maybe not the most distinctive of their releases, but something has to be said about the band's amazing longevity. With these tracks, the vocals follow the mostly predictable guitar riffs; this record really excels, however, with loose punk rock that somehow manages to sustain a certain authority, thanks mostly to its rough-hewn production. Comes with a multi-page lyric booklet, all in Finnish. All in all, a solid effort. (SS)
(Killer)

AIRES AND GRACES / BROADSIDERS – split EP

It's refreshing to know US Oi is alive and well, thanks in no small part to Longshot Music. I'm always talking about how I hate plodding Oi, but Mike at Longshot has an ear for hooks and energy. BROADSIDERS are meat-and-potatoes skinhead rock from Texas—total Roehrs territory. I actually dig the AIRES AND GRACES side much more; it reminds of a band called TANK RAY from a few years back. The music is straight-up trad street-punk/Oi, but the singer has a really distinctive voice. The cover of the DEAD BOYS is OK, but their own track is the bomb. I love this!! (TB)
(Longshot)

AMBER JETS / VELOCITY – split EP

DESCENDENTS fans, stand up and be counted! Two bands in the D-boys vein here. The AMBER JETS, who include the former singer of SERPICO and DARIEN, knock out a couple *Milo Goes to College*-type numbers. VELOCITY from Japan is more in the later ALL-esque vein. Four great poppy songs on this limited release. (RL)
(self-released)

ANTI-EVERYTHING – "The International Conspiracy to Push You Down" CD

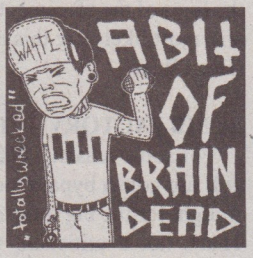
Most interesting thing about this band is that they are from Trinidad and Tobago, as in, y'know, the West Indies! I guess punk really is everywhere. Beyond that, they sound pretty American—who knows, mebbe they are American. They fairly adroitly run through a variety of modern punk styles, coming across as an accomplished sort of AGAINST ME! I like the slower, acoustic-y poppy ones more than the angry-man hardcore, but that's no real surprise. West Indies... who would've thought? Well, save *MRR*'s own Mykel Board, who pops up with some extra vocals on a couple of tracks. (RK)
(self-released)

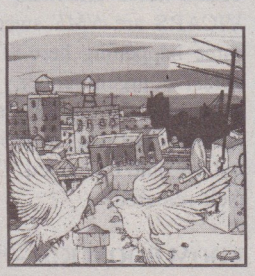
ARMEDALITE RIFLES – "Shambolic? Indeed!" 2x12"

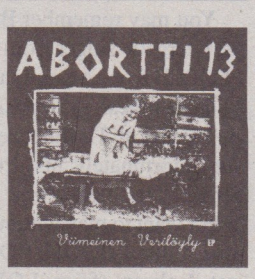
I thought these guys were faster and tougher then I realized I was thinking of the *CANADIAN* RIFLES. Anyway, this is DIY rock 'n' roll pop music, and as the title suggests it has a shambolic, falling-apart feel to it. There are fourteen tracks over two 12" records. At times it sounds like the MINUTEMEN, at others something off those *Messthetics* comps. If you like loose and lazy then this should be up your alley. (AD)
(FDH)

BANNER PILOT – "Pass the Poison" LP

This sounds like a cross between RHYTHM COLLISION and your typical Midwest-meets-Florida mid-to-up-tempo melodic punk. I'm sure they get compared to DILLINGER 4 a lot, and not without reason. And JAWBREAKER too, and not without reason either, though BANNER PILOT seems to see no reason to keep things at a slower pace when you can be like the RAMONES and go, man, go. It has a nice, rough feel and plenty of energy, not to mention CRIMPSHRINE-like earnestness. Very good. (AD)
(Kiss of Death)







BLACK KNOTS – "Guitarmageddon" CD

According to the one-sheet with this CD, "The BLACK KNOTS have this very coveted 'thing' that very little rawk bands possess. It's called originality." I would have to respectfully disagree with this statement as to me it seems like I've heard and seen this shtick countless times before. Even down to the stylized cover artwork!! This could easily pass for the HELLACOPTERS or the CANDY SNATCHERS with the wailing guitar riffs, pounding bass and drums, and screaming vocals. I'm not so naïve as to believe that there is really *anything* out there that is "original" anymore—and it's not really necessary in my humble opinion, as long as the music is good. Are the BLACK KNOTS original? Not really… Are the BLACK KNOTS good? Yeah. So if you're a fan of anything along the lines of the aforementioned bands, then you will most likely dig this as well… (ML)
(Dead Beat)

BOMB FACTORY – "Tapes" CDEP

For some reason I get the feeling that these kids are gonna bypass the punk scene and head straight for the big time, or at least bigger time. That's not a criticism; the same way THEE VICARS are *NME* sweethearts I can see the same happening here. The music is stellar—abrasive, urgent, choppy post-punk WARSAW vs. GANG OF FOUR. Production is crisp, guitars are *loud*. This is gooood shit. If it were vinyl it would be top ten. CDEP? Weeeeak. (TB)
(self-released)

BOOM BOOM KID – "Frisbee" CD

You may remember BOOM BOOM KID as the energetic singer from the now-defunct FUN PEOPLE from Argentina. I think he just might be the happiest, most positive guy on the planet. He played at Thrillhouse just a few days ago, but unfortunately his drummer quit the night before. The bassist was there, but apparently didn't want to play without the drummer, so this time around BOOM BOOM KID's band was just Jackson (from LOVE SONGS/THIS IS MY FIST) playing guitar with BOOM BOOM KID singing. There aren't that many people that would keep playing in those circumstances, but BOOM BOOM KID keeps it positive and keeps it alive. The last time I saw him play with the full band, it was totally awesome—he was all over the place like a monkey playing in a tree. BOOM BOOM KID rules, very similar to FUN PEOPLE but with more playful lyrics ("Let's go play with the frisbee!"). If you ever get the chance to see him play live, full band or partial, there's something wrong with you if you don't go. You'll hear about it the next day and you'll kick yourself for not going. Bonus: this CD actually comes packaged in a real frisbee, with a huge poster to boot! (BD)
(self-released)

BORED GAMES – "Party Till You Puke" 10"

Six sickly sweet pop songs heavily influenced by '50s-era rock 'n' roll. Listening to this album feels like floating on a tiny pop-punk cloud. Real simple and real catchy songs with terrific vocal harmonies. They have a striking resemblance to the MUFFS, or maybe a rock 'n' roll version of IRMA THOMAS. They play oldies-sounding tunes in a similar way to REIGNING SOUND. Ex-members of LEFTY LOOSIE, OH-UH, and probably a zillion other bands. This is a great album, oh so catchy! (FS)
(Repulsion)

BORED STRAIGHT / NORDIC WASTE / HOLY SHIT! – split EP

This is an awesome EP that features two songs from three amazing up-and-coming Milwaukee DIY hardcore bands. BORED STRAIGHT plays thumbs-up old-school hardcore, much like their forbearers DIE KREUZEN. Straight-up cows-and-beer growl-core. HOLY SHIT! has a similar approach with a bit of nihilistic punk thrown in, and is perhaps becoming my favorite of the pack. But they're all pretty good so it's hard to say. NORDIC WASTE has a bit more of a grindcore/DISCORDANCE AXIS thing going on, but with an incredible female singer! This is a cool Midwest hardcore document, limited to 666 copies and completely DIY. Grab one now or miss out. (BG)
(self-released)

BOTELLÓN DE CASTIGO / CHANCLETA – split EP

BOTELLÓN DE CASTIGO kicks this shit off right with some raw, raging punk with rad gang vocals, abundant drum breaks, and mostly good riffs. For some reason, the drumming reminds me a lot of WHOREHOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, and there's also somewhat of an early Profane Existence sound going on, though this is a bit heavier and more abrasive. CHANCLETA follows them up with some furious grind-influenced hardcore with cool irreverent changeups and maybe an E-150 sort of flavor. Awesome. (DG)
(self-released)

A BRIDGE TO MANY – "Weights" EP

This is exactly what I thought it would be from the cover and packaging: generic modern hardcore in the neo-youth crew/emo-mosh mold. Oh, they're from France. (VX)
(Distorted Charly Brown / Eternalis)

BRILLIANT COLORS – "Introducing" LP

San Francisco trio featuring *MRR* distribution coordinator Diane on drums. I have a feeling they will instantly be compared to VIVIAN GIRLS and DUM DUM GIRLS by many lazy reviewers (not me), but BRILLIANT COLORS do all the things I always wish those other two bands would. They rock. They write catchy songs. They don't bury themselves beneath a wall of noisy distortion and barely decipherable vocals. Their songs are sort of anthemic. You can scream and sing and dance and do whatever you feel like while listening to this. Reminds me of all the best girl punk bands. It's just a really fun, cool record. (CK)
(Slumberland)

PAUL CARY / THEE OH-SEES – split EP

Sleepy, country-tinged lo-fi from THEE OH-SEES. It's what you would expect. It's got a little bit of that last-prom-dance, '50s echo jangle fuzz to it. Like they've been listening to the PLATTERS and taking notes. PAUL CARY is like the male version of CAT POWER when she starts singing traditional country folk songs. It's not bad. It's OK. (MM)
(Stankhouse)

CLOAK/DAGGER – "Lost Art" CD

This is CLOAK/DAGGER's second album for Jade Tree, though I'll admit I haven't given them much more than a passing listen since their debut EP on Grave Mistake. My first impression here was of some sort of REGULATIONS/HOT SNAKES hybrid—in other words, stripped-down "modern-retro" hardcore at a mid-to-fast-tempo with clean production and jangly, discordant down-stroked guitar. I was also reminded of their Grave Mistake labelmates DEEP SLEEP... quite a bit, actually. The vocals have the swagger of HOT SNAKES or even Damian from FUCKED UP at times, and just the slightest bit of the more "singing" delivery that I associate with a band like LIFETIME. For all the different elements, it meshes together well, though I'm on my third consecutive listen of the entire album and no particular song is making much of an impression on me. Lyrics deal mostly with personal-type concerns, while "Fast Food Dream" sums up the current state of American consumerism succinctly. (CS)
(Jade Tree)

THE CONCRETE GODS – "Welcome to the Empire Club" CD

Pretty enjoyable collection of London (as in UK, not Ontario north of the border) power-pop and punk. At it's best, musically, they touch on the VAPORS, and the best of the reformed MENACE. They have the good sense to present a stirring cover of PULP's "Common People" though lyrically, their class-consciousness seems to stray into all kinds of ambivalence.. can't quite figure out whether the nostalgia for the 'old ways' (always typically 'mythical') of the working class, includes the nonsense of god, queen, and country...Well worth wrestling with it yourselves though, dear reader. (RK)
(self-released)

CONSERVANTES ADULTERADOS / LOS NINATOS – split EP

This is the sonic equivalent of walking the streets, kicking rocks and trash and running your fingers along a chain link fence—the ecstasy of smashing glass. This spilt makes me feel invincible. CONSERVANTES ADULTERADOS' first song has this swagger and bounce that is romantic and timeless, with a traditional first-wave Spanish punk feel, and all the melody and hooks that make me want to dance and make love at the same time. Their next song "Fuga en el Frenopatico"—I think that means escape from the mental hospital?—is a raging little ditty and I want to walk down the street and jeer at squares and play with me flick-knife. LOS NINATOS one song on this platter is so good, I don't know what to say as it has me shaking my titties and knocking shit over. It's a perfect punk song with amazing back-up vocals and a driving beat. This record is limited to 344 copies and is some sort of benefit for legal purposes, so I highly doubt these greasy, grimey hands will ever own a copy, nor will you, dear reader. (RR)
(Los Punkis De Provincias Somos Asin)

CONTROL – "Hooligan Rock'n'Roll" LP

Yes sir! CONTROL, hailing from the UK, have delivered an excellent LP entitled *Hooligan Rock'n'Roll*. The Longshot Music label from San Francisco, in conjunction-with Contra Records from Germany, have blessed you skins and punks with some high quality, politically charged street rock! In "Keep the Home Fires Burning," Iain and his cohorts sing: "We're a bankrupt nation / A broken state." "Guilty by Association" addresses a problem skins and punks have been dealing with since 1976—tarring all men and women who look similar with the same brush—crass generalization. "Stand Up and Fight" expresses fervent emotions about inept government control: "We've all had enough." On side B you get "Spirit of Boudicca" where CONTROL sings about how the country's leaders have abandoned the working men and women. "Vigilante" laments a legal system that protects psychopaths. This is a good record from start to finish! You get good lyrics with rock-solid punk and Oi music! Get your copy now! (BR)
(Longshot/Contra)

COPROLITOS – "Miss Melilla" EP

Rad femme-fronted punk from Madrid. Spain is killing it!! Frantic vocals over messy urgent punk rock, mixing classic Spanish bands of old like ÚLTIMO RESORTE, and new ones like SILLA ELECTRICA as well as the TYRADES. Bet this lot would be a blast live. The last song "Unagi Don" is a barnstormer!! Totally killer and mandatory (along with the new SILLA ELECTRICA EP on the same label). (TB)
(Blondes Must Die)

CRACKS – "Dirty Floor" EP

Straightforward punk songs with enough sloppiness to make it worth listening to all the way through. This suburban Illinois band sounds like they could have just played McGregor's or Durty Nellie's in the early '90s. Definitely have a party band feel about them, with a nice heavy bass sound. "My Story" is the winner off this disc. Cool. (MS)
(Slipping Grip)

THE CREEPS / FEAR OF LIPSTICK – split EP

I don't know what's up with me these days. It could be two things—either pop-punk has run its course on me, or there's just so many of these bands these days that it keeps getting tougher to break free of the mold and find a sound that sets your band apart from the rest. I think it's mostly the latter. I feel like my reviews are sounding like broken records: "nothing bad here, but nothing really that exciting," ad nauseum. Maybe the problem is that bands like the CREEPS and FEAR OF LIPSTICK sound so similar and end up on the same record that it all blurs into one? I've flipped the record so many times now that I couldn't tell you which is which. (BD)
(Scared to Death/Fucking Scam)

CRUCIAL SECTION – "Against the Wind" EP

Japan's CRUCIAL SECTION has been playing their brand of fast, thrashy hardcore for a good long while now. If you somehow don't know them but are into bands like REPROACH, TOTAL FURY, or DAS OATH, then climb out from under your rock and check out this 7". It's time for some circle pits and sing-alongs. (VX)
(Must Play Fast)

THE CRUMBS / THE RIDICULES – split EP

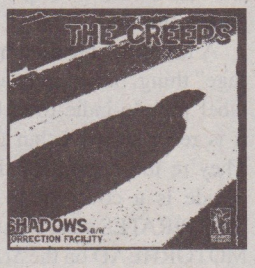
Maybe it's meant to be a bit sloppy for some reason (like, because it's "punk" rock?), but it kinda sounds like the CRUMBS side of this split 7" EP was hastily recorded in one take. These two songs are OK—kind of garage-y punk rock—but with the hollow drum sound, flat nasally vocals, and overall poor mix, this was nothing that caught my attention, unfortunately. However, the RIDICULES side is tight and well recorded and the snotty SCREECHING WEASEL-sounding songs are catchy and easy to get stuck in your head! So overall this one is 50/50 for me... (ML)
(It's Alive)

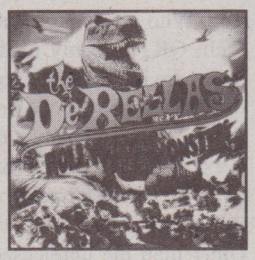
DADFAG – "Scenic Abuse" CD

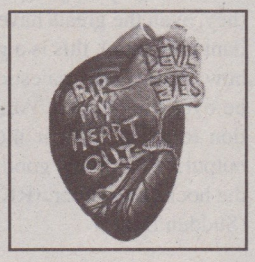
Off-key, off-time, and a lot of dissonance. It's a total mess of desperation. The drums steadily push everything along while the two guitars and two girls constantly clash against each other. Their voices screech and stutter through lyrics, trying to make sense of everything, while the guitars sound as if they are purposely out of tune (good). My point is that it's an enjoyable chaos. It's like'90s-inspired no-wave screech. Like MARS and AUTOCLAVE at the same time. The recording is kind of bummer—the vocals are way too loud on most of the tracks, and in general I kind of like this band better live. Basically, it didn't blow my mind on the first listen, but then I spent my entire day waiting to come home and listen to it again. And again. And again. (MM)
(Broken Rekids)

DEAD TO ME – "African Elephants" LP

Almost exactly what you'd expect from a Fat Wreck release. Melodic pop-punk that doesn't stray too far from the NOFX song blueprint. This album is kind of a stick in the mud (not very exciting). The first song, after the intro, does rule though. But everything after that is pretty easy to forget about. Yawn. (FS)
(Fat Wreck Chords)







THE DERELLAS – "Hollywood Monsters" CD

Old-school '77 punk from the UK that wants to be glam. These guys have certainly listened to their DEAD BOYS and NEW YORK DOLLS. Unfortunately, this is so clichéd and predictable that they come across as just an OK bar-band in LA circa 1989. (RL)
(Crush World)

DEVIL EYES – "Rip My Heart Out/Please Don't Touch"

A Montreal band attempting to do the "garage" thing, but coming across more as a major label pseudo-indie-rock band. They can play, it is recorded well, but the vocals just kill it. They're too high-pitched. Too fake sounding. B-side is a cover of a JOHNNY KID AND THE PIRATES song most famously covered by MOTÖRHEAD on the *St. Valentine's Day Massacre* 7". It is better than the A-side, but do they really think they can outdo Lemmy? Geesh. (CK)
(Signed By Force)

DEVON DISASTER – "Make Things Bleed" CD

Generic electro-pop. Not punk. (MM)
(Red Lounge)

DOA – "Kings of Punk, Hockey and Beer" CD

DOA will always be the kings of punk, for sure. Who gives a fuck about hockey or beer!? Well, OK, probably loads of folks. What you have here is a collection of DOA efforts primarily about hockey, a couple about beer. There are a couple of previously unreleased tracks, which is exciting for the fans like me, with the majority of the thirteen tracks being culled from their full-lengths over the last fifteen years or so. Other than the unreleased gems (which really are rather good), and the cuts from the pedestrian and largely forgettable *Loggerheads* record (hey, even the greats have their not-utterly-brilliant moments), this is a great demonstration of how consistently majestic DOA have proven to be over the decades. And a fantastic introduction to some of their more (relatively) recent output. A band this good, one can forgive 'em the hockey and beer. (RK)
(Sudden Death)

DOOM – "Fuck Peaceville" CD

Re-listening to this record makes me want a DOOM patch. I wonder if I could find one in a mall, much to the band's dismay. This is the CD reissue of DOOM's incendiary album *Fuck Peaceville*. And it's a real scorcher. It was recorded in the early/mid-'90s and released on a couple labels (Profane Existence and Grade-A-Tharpe) with two different versions (one gatefold and one fold-out sleeve, I think). The basic story behind the album title is that Peaceville owner Hammy joined forces with a major subsidiary (Music for Nations) and the band got pissed. So they decided to re-record their back catalogue with better production. *Fuck Peaceville* is the product of those recordings and in my mind it is the pinnacle of their existence. Essential UK crust, full of power and brutality. And the packaging of this reissue comes in a nice digipak with a booklet insert. Well worth buying. (DB)
(Twisted Chords)

DTO – "Doomed to Obscurity" CD

Another CD with a terrible cover (cartoon punk chicks) that's actually pretty good. Philly's DTO play up-tempo snotty punk with a street-punk influence—though they sound more like old American bands (KRAUT, the FREEZE) than British Oi bands because of the speedy tempo and melody. They have enough hooks and a good, solid sound to make this one a winner... and you get a sticker, a patch, and a button! (AD)
(self-released)

EASTER MONKEYS – "Splendor of Sorrow" CD+DVD

Existing roughly from 1981 to '84, Cleveland's EASTER MONKEYS seem mostly forgotten today. That's understandable for a band that had only one proper release half a decade after their demise, but hopefully this reissue will remind a few folks with an ear for ugly sounds of the bootprint they left on the face of punk history. The fact that their guitar player was involved (at least peripherally) with both PERE UBU and the ELECTRIC EELS should be cause for interest here. While not as adventurous as PERE UBU or as furious and raw as the PAGANS, the MONKEYS fall somewhere in the middle ground between those two Cleveland giants. The guitar feeds back and the sax wails, but at its base this is driving rock 'n' roll. The original version of *Splendor of Sorrow* (recorded in '83, released on vinyl in '90) boasts a couple of legitimately massive tracks—the crushing opener "Take Another Pill" and "Nailed to the Cross"—and this CD reissue adds their classic contribution to the *Cleveland Confidential* LP ("Cheap Heroin") plus a handful of equally great unreleased live tracks. Supposedly this is the "original mix" of the *Splendor* album, and it does sound noticeably different: maybe a bit too bass-heavy, though at the same time it adds depth and fullness to the sound. Something gained, something lost. The accompanying DVD didn't blow my mind with amazing-quality footage, but, uh...it's cool that it exists, y'know? I'm glad they threw it on here. All in all, this one is well worth looking into. (CS)
(Smog Veil)

EJACULOID – "Fearce" 45

One-song, one-sided 45 with a dark and chaotic grindcore track. The song breaks down for just a hot minute, and then there are scary keyboards, and then the blasting begins again, with the vocals shrieking "Fearce!" over and over. Throw in an etched B-side and a comic book, throw the whole thing in a plastic bag, and you've got yourself one EJACULOID release. To be fair, I think the record comes free with the comic book, not the other way around. (WN)
(Goteblud Comics)

THE ELECTRICUTIONS – "Locked Gates/Lonely Roads" CD

Very political, late-'70s punk throwback music. Almost breaking into a hardcore sound but not quite getting there. Nothing too original or special going on here. Guys in the band probably take some cues from something like ANGRY SAMOANS or DEAD BOYS. Whatever. (FS)
(Big Neck)

ERUPTORS – "Seduce & Destroy" CD

Let me just list off the overall visual aesthetic of the CD artwork and whatnot and see if we can conjure up an idea of the sound, OK? On the cover, we have a cartoon drawing of a topless girl with tattoos of flames on her nipples and coming out of her panties. More artwork in the foldout booklet reveals topless, horned devil girls and a werewolf (wereboar?) driving a muscle car with lots of flames and exhaust pipes with a girl riding in the back holding a skull (actually, a pretty rad drawing); and then there are more cartoon girls in lingerie and bikinis, as well as photos of a scantly clad woman with a shotgun. Are we getting an image yet? Let's see...song titles include "1000% Rock... Baby!" and "Leaving (On the Wings of an Eagle)"; photos of the band reveal lots of jean jackets, facial hair, and a cowboy hat! Are we fuggin' getting somewhere? Let's throw the CD on and find out....yep, RAWK! (BG)
(Maniac Squat)

ESCAPE TO VICTORY – "The Front Page" CD

Melodic hardcore from the UK that sounds pretty bad. Along the ways of mid-'80s US punk sound-wise, but this is produced poorly. Political lyrics with a vocal-heavy mix and thin-sounding backing. Next time let it rip, boys. (RL)
(GFN)

ESPRIT DE CORPS – "Under Constant Influence" CD

I'm sure this band's hearts are in the right place, and I'm sure they are really, really nice guys and totally DIY and down with the scene and everything. But this record is not very

good. Overly earnest, with bedroom teen-angst poetry for lyrics. You know, the kind of thing you might write in your diary after your very first girlfriend dumps you (probably because she hates your band); "You'll never find another boy like me, I promise you that." Musically, they smack of that post-emo stuff that's going on with all the kids right now… maybe FALLOUT BOY and their ilk. Maybe hints of AT THE DRIVE IN. Not terrible, but not terribly original either. (AM)
(Esprit De Corps)

THE ESTRANGED – "Type Foundry Session I" LP

Here we got it, you doom-and-gloom merchants, a platter of maximum discontent containing all of the ESTRANGED's 7" output. If ya ain't familiar with soggy ol' Portland's purveyors of darkness and misery, then expect a big spoonful of the WIPERS, KILLING JOKE, BORN DEAD ICONS, WARSAW, and a load of mid-'80s Dischord Records. They are all of the above whilst still maintaining their very own solid identity. Eight beautifully depressing songs that are probably at this minute mimicking the equally miserable Portland weather. Brilliant. (SD)
(Dirtnap / Black Water)

ESTROGEN HIGHS – "Tell It to Them" LP

I always feel bad for the first record I review when I get to *MRR* HQ. I just had a really nice bicycle ride through the chilly, foggy SF streets. It's getting dark and colder. I am in a very good mood so if that first record doesn't accentuate my current state, well… sorry. ESTROGEN HIGHS are nice. Poppy, jangly indie rock tunes. Lo-fi in the currently popular way. But this is the type of record I want to listen to when I am warm and hanging around the house after eating a nice dinner, just taking it easy. It's sweet and relaxing. (CK)
(Dead Beat)

EXISTENTIAL NIGHTMARE – CD

What a fucking mess this is. Starts with someone screaming and never really lets up. This is really fucking abrasive. Two people, Cam contributing vocals and guitar and Donnie with the bass and drums. Leads me to believe they learned to play and write songs based on a mix-tape with just the first CRUCIFUCKS LP, an assortment of DRUNKS WITH GUNS, and the first RUDIMENTARY PENI EP. Just heavy and noisy and it's giving me a headache, but I'm totally loving it. Song titles are pretty out there too: "Fathomless Chaos of Eternal Night?" "Psychosexual Immortalizer?" What? Cover art is a bit generic and cheap, but ultimately that kind of adds to the whole package of the band. It seems as though the only way to buy this is through eBay for $5. This is like, whoa. (VL)
(Suggestive Phantasm)

FACE THE RAIL – LP

Lemme just gush for a minute, OK? The scene that FACE THE RAIL operates in is fucking *tight*! And that is in no small part due to the former and current bands these guys play in. Three of the four dudes were in the SECOND OPINION, a band that opened the door for the wave of young lions that are crushing Bay Area punk right now. The drummer earned his chops in SHANGHI SURPRISE, others in ECOLI and NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE. I've seen Jake, the guitarist, grow in the last couple years into a dizzying machine that turns everything he touches to gold! I totally shit my pants when I even first saw this record—artist Mark Reategui really outdid himself with the Mesozoic tidal wave, psychedelic/beach burn-out aesthetic. The record stands alone in innovation, somehow sewing together unique scale-based rock riffs with an aggro skate sound that takes traditional punk nods from all over the goddamned chart. One part JFA, two parts ANNIHILATION TIME, definitely some LOSER LIFE, and a shitload of originality make this record a total winner. After like a million listens in a week, I still can't quite wrap my head around this one—see for yourself. (RM)
(Tankcrimes)

FACE VALUE – "Rode Hard, Put Away Wet: Clevo HC '89-'93" CD+DVD

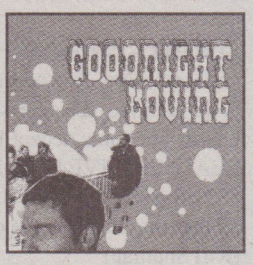
Ah, FACE VALUE, where to begin… First off, this band featured Tony Erba of 9 SHOCKS, GORDON SOLIE, H-100S, etc. on vocals. Their first LP, *The Price of Maturity*, from 1991, starts this disc off and isn't nearly as good as the *Coming of Age* 7" from '90 that follows. Also collected on this disc are the demo—which is great in a crappy sort of way—and second LP, *Kick It Over*. FACE VALUE played in that choppy, moshy, late-'80s sorta way with somewhat of a NYHC feel, but the Cleveland sound was its own thing, with bands like RINGWORM, CONFRONT, DIE HARD and FACE VALUE all coming up at the same time and sharing a similar sound. Unfortunately, FACE VALUE was (musically) the weakest of the bunch. As for the DVD portion of this, the sound quality is pretty all right and most of the footage looks good, but since I'm not the biggest fan, I had a hard time paying attention. Not what I would exactly call a necessary reissue, but if you're into FACE VALUE, I'd say it's worth it for the DVD, since you probs already have the records. (JU)
(Smog Veil)

FELLOW PROJECT / JONESIN – split EP

FELLOW PROJECT presents a maudlin and vaguely political vocal-driven side to this EP. The JONESIN side doesn't offer much more than FELLOW PROJECT, other than a confusingly humorous rendition of tortured lyrics ("…and I'll take a fuckin' slice of life, I wish the sun was a giant pizza pie."). Both bands have a kind of ADD/C vocals thing going on, but the guitar playing is less dynamic and the energy is a bit lower. This EP makes me think of being too drunk at a show in Minneapolis and crying because you think you'll never see your friend again. He's going on a boat trip and it'll probably fail and he'll probably be back tomorrow, but for now you're really upset and need this bawling emo act to push you over the edge. Don't worry, you probably won't remember it tomorrow. (HD)
(Kiss of Death)

FESTIPALS – "Gold Magic" EP

Oh my god, how did this happen? Self-indulgent intro riffs evocative of the self-indulgent days of the GET UP KIDS (who, admittedly, aren't punk at all) with much more clever lyrics that aren't exclusively about the writer's girlfriend. For example, the first track, "Revolver," is about killing yourself over debt—pretty scary for a sweet-



voiced pop-punk group. Oh wait! I totally know how this happened; five pre-existing emo bands sent their most talented representatives to create something of a pop-punk emotional UN. The sleeve art is both endearing and contrived, which confuses me. (HD)
(It's Alive)

FISCHER / GHOSTLIMB – split 10"

I like FISCHER. I liked their last 7" and I like their side of this record. They sound somewhere between the East Bay and Gainseville. Maybe they sound like New York because they remind me of the INSURGENT. Melodic DIY punk done well. Sometimes the lyrics are a little too "woe is me," but other than that this side is totally solid. Check this out if you're into bands like POTBOILER or RVIVR, labels like No Idea (and old Lookout!), or even just well played gritty pop-punk like DEAD MECHANICAL. I don't really know what to make of GHOSTLIMB. They play hardcore. Sometimes with clean-ish-guitar, metal-style riffs that seems to work well with a really distorted bass. At one point it's slower-paced and it's a dude busting vocals over a lone crooning guitar. The music is cool. The lyrics are intelligent and interesting. The vocals don't really gel with the music. It just sounds like some dude shouting over the music, as opposed to shouting along with it, but it doesn't detract too much from rest of the record. Go get it. (P$)
(Vitriol / Great Plains)

FLIGHT – "Over My Head" 10"

Depressive lo-fi dark-wave pop one-man band action. Bass-heavy with weirdo keyboards but some decent hooks in the DIGITAL LEATHER, LIVE FAST DIE, and the buzzword JESUS AND MARY CHAIN vein. What's with all the drug music these days?? (TB)
(Kill Shaman)

FRIENDS OF FRIENDS – "Deep Search" CD

It sounds like these guys draw major influences from the likes of JAWBREAKER and the first couple of PROPAGANDHI records. The music sounds like a cross between those, with maybe a little AGAINST ME! here and there. This disc didn't come with any sort of lyric sheet, which bugs me because that's almost more important than the music itself. You can hear most of what they're saying, but it would be nice to be able to read along with it to get the full picture. (BD)
(self-released)

FUNGI GIRLS – "Seafaring Pyramids" LP

This is interesting. I hate to hate, but it's almost more interesting than it is enjoyable. I like the music. I don't like the vocals as much because they are too mellow. The music is all over the place. There are shoegazey songs that sound like something that would have come out on Captured Tracks. There are garage rock 'n' roll songs. There are songs that sound more like lo-fi noisy garagey pop than punk songs. Which is all right. While this isn't really my bag, the music is well played. The songs aren't bad. This would appeal to someone who is more into garage jams than I am. The press release says that someone from the WAX MUSEUMS recorded this, and that PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT really like them. I only liked that first WAX MUSEUMS EP (I liked it a lot), but if you liked all the WAX MUSEUMS EPs then this might be up your alley. (P$)
(Play Pinball)

GERIATRIC UNIT – "Permethrin Blues" LP

This English's band *fourth* 12" (Wow! When did that happen?)—the twelve tracks here offer no let-up in throttling intensity, and while they feature members of HERESY, HARD TO SWALLOW, and IRON MONKEY, the most apt comparison might be if you sent SEEIN' RED off on a heavy RIPCORD tangent. There's the same kind of manic, fast snare-driven drumming, but instead of blurring into quick, short bursts of thrash, there's more of the 1987-era SS DECONTROL-by-way-of Bristol-and-Nottingham charge to the guitars. The drumming really sends this record into another level of high velocity compared to other outings by the band I've heard, making for the perfect-length quick 45-RPM blast. Lyrics tackle cynicism, idiots, the disconnect of war images on TV, useless metal bands, and more. Ace! (KS)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

GET BENT – "Dead It" EP

This is some pretty standard poppy punk with nothing that really stands out to me as amazing. Definitely not bad, and I bet they're fun to see live, but there just isn't much here that grabs my attention. Musically, it's basically mid-tempo rock with plenty of guitar riffage to round out the overall sound. If you're a fan of It's Alive Records, you might want to check this out. I'm personally split 50/50 with their output, and unfortunately this falls in the half that doesn't catch my attention. (BD)
(It's Alive)

GIRLS AT DAWN – "Never Enough/Every Night"

I'm a big fan of female-fronted punk rock/power-pop. I really am. I also think that some folks tend to exploit the whole female-fronted thing. This is not punk rock. This is a sort of melodic, girls-singing-in-harmony-with-a-soft-organ-and-tambourine-in-the-background type of thing. Imagine ENYA if she were younger and less produced. If it weren't for music, these girls might well get mixed up in the Renaissance Faire. (KK)
(HoZac)

GOD'S GIFT – "Pathology: Manchester 1979-1984" CD

GOD'S GIFT were contemporaries of both the FALL and JOY DIVISION, and I would say that their music falls somewhere in the nexus between those two. They have the FALL's sarcastic, loping, angry quality, and the dark moroseness of JOY DIVISION too. Though apparently they were viewed as too rowdy and incompetent to play shows with either band... Manchester music during this era is pretty untouchable in terms of creativity and possibility, and this exemplifies that perfectly. While this band had records on New Hormones, I had never heard of 'em until this CD was plonked in my box. There's something about the way the bass and guitar interact, this lurching collapsing rock feel that reminds me of Australia's VENOM P. STINGER—that sort of aggressive yet restrained attack on what rock music is, and in turn what punk is... I would definitely recommend picking this up—it's an awesome document of a somewhat forgotten band. (LG)
(Hyped 2 Death)

THE GOLDEN BOYS – "The Electric Wolfman" LP

"Shambolic collection of party rockers and soulful wailers" sez the record label, and that's a good place to start. Some late VELVET UNDERGROUND with SATAN AND DECIPLES-style homegrown wackiness and some rootsiness that's at times reminiscent of THE BAND, except that THE BAND sucked and the GOLDEN BOYS do not. (DD)
(Alien Snatch/Daggerman)

GOOD MORNING / PSYKOTIC KINESIS – split EP

PSYKOTIC KENESIS has an anarchist crust leaning, but is not your run-of-the-mill crust band. The bass seems to be the main instrument and is prominent on a lot of the tracks. They also throw in some violin. The main vocals are female yells. It took a few listens for me to get into their tracks, but I did. GOOD MORNING has, for a lack of a better way to put it, a refreshing sound. It's a nice combination of '80s West Coast hardcore, keyboards, and some vague anarchist metal. Yeah, read that again—the sound is unique. There are three vocal styles often going on at the same time: an understandable '80s hardcore bark, death metal growls, and scary troll-like black metal vocals. Keyboards are prominent but in a dark, black metal sort of way. I haven't heard anything like this and I think they pull it off. (MH)
(Dilapidated)

GOODNIGHT LOVING – "Nothing Conquers Us/ Scary Bad"

Goddamn it, here's a single that actually sounds like a single (quite a rarity these days). A-side is catchy, anthemic, and well-crafted bit of poppy rock with subtle touches of some other stuff (bubblegum? FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS?) evident; B-side is bouncy and appealing. This record made me happy. (DD)
(Dirtnap)

GROSS NEGLIGENCE – "Skate the Apocalypse" EP

GROSS NEGLIGENCE spits out six change-of-pace hardcore tracks with a distinct skate influence. Their best songs (like the wiry, pungent "Smash It Up") don't sacrifice a hint of melody, opting instead for frenetic guitar riffs. Their SoCal roots are easy to find in the intense, rockin' song structures. As long as they don't go overboard with their guitars (as with their over-indulgent finishing track), the results are tight, and show exceptional promise as a live outfit. Very solid debut. (SS)
(Flat Black)

GUMBI – "Ritual" EP

There was a long instrumental that introduced this record and an elongated drum solo at the end that were pretty boring. But the songs sandwiched between those are pretty good. The second track, "Grey Sea," is really enjoyable. It sounds like some Revolution Summer-influenced band covering college radio rock (like the BEATINGS) from the beginning of this decade. Only a quarter of the record sounds like that. The rest has more of a distorted emotive hardcore vibe. The hits-to-misses ratio on here just isn't quite on-point because there are too many instrumental parts that aren't too interesting. Two condensed songs would have been better than four sprawling ones. (P$)
(Repulsion)

HARRINGTON SAINTS – "Dead Broke in the USA" LP

These working-class stiffs are probably the most popular band on the incredible Longshot label, and I can see why, as they play tremendously catchy sing-along street-punk, sounding much like COCK SPARRER mixed with the COCKNEY REJECTS. And goddamn if this record doesn't smoke in the high-energy department! I think the HARRINGTON SAINTS are all about being seen live and getting drunk and belligerent, and jumping up and down with your friends. The album captures that vigor on wax, and the 45 RPM format ensures an even louder experience. Every song on this album sounds like an anthem, but personally, I wouldn't mind a bit more variety. I prefer a bit more of the low-key Oi! stuff like the TEMPLARS, but my skinhead friend Scott, who loves the DROPKICK MURPHEYS and drinks Guinness until the sun comes up, would absolutely love this. Does that make any sense? (BG)
(Longshot)

HAUNTED GEORGE – "Where's Charlie Jones?" LP

Many folks work at being spooky—work way too hard at it, in fact. On the other hand, HAUNTED GEORGE just plain *is* spooky. This is in a league with ROKY ERICKSON and HASIL ADKINS, no faking. (DD)
(In the Red)

THE HEIZ – CD

Tokyo three-piece the HEIZ comes storming out of the gate with some balls-to-the-wall ol' timey garage. Wearing their '60s influences loud and proud, taking in some early blues influence from the PRETTY THINGS, the YARDBIRDS and even a soulful touch of THEE MIDNIGHTERS. It ain't whacking ya with any surprises, but that's totally fine due to the bags of energy, attitude, and rawness. (SD)
(Tokyo No)

HHH – "Sin Identidad/Intellectual Punks" LP

Prior to this I'd only heard the split with VITU'S DANCE, which I enjoyed but honestly can't bring to mind. Nevertheless, this record came as a pleasant surprise as it compiles the *Sin Identidad* demo tape, the *Intellectual Punks* 7", and studio outtakes from one of Spain's earliest fastcore bands. The demo is just straight-up, raging fast hardcore while the 7", heralded as a classic, sees the band moving ever so slightly toward crossing over. An HHH side project, OVERTHHHROW, was supposed to be the band's crossover heavy metal outlet, but that doesn't mean these recordings are devoid of metallic moments. The 21-song demo is a compelling appropriation of Scandinavian speed and intensity (think MOB 47, ASOCIAL, etc.). I actually prefer the demo of all the recordings. It's undeniably great hardcore! Everything else that follows is good, but that demo is extra rippin'. An absolutely great record for *Sin Identidad* alone! (DB)
(BCore)

HIDDEN SPOTS – "Hundred Million Voices" LP

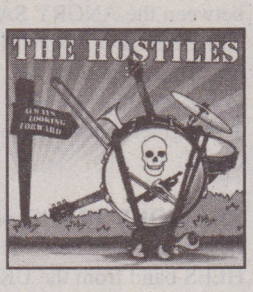
This is a nice breath of fresh air from the first few records I have listened to this month. I had heard of these guys but not heard them when I put this on. While I don't think it is really possible to reinvent the pop-punk wheel, it is possible to hone that wheel into a nice, almost perfectly round piece of machinery. Chattanooga's HIDDEN SPOTS have done just that. The vocals have a pretty defined Bob Mould vibe, but less HÜSKER DÜ and more SUGAR, almost crossing into DILLINGER FOUR territory at times. I love the cover art here, too. It's gotta be at least a hundred or so ghosts, each drawn by a different friend of the band, each personally listed in the insert. (BD)
(Mauled by Tigers)

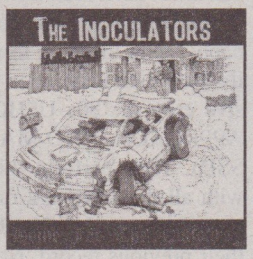
HIJACKS – "Consuming Our Compassion" CD

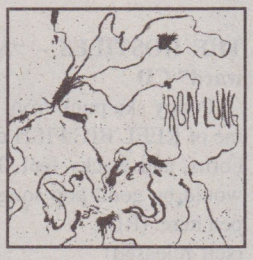
If these dudes are in high school, then this is an OK first step into world of punk. If they're not, then this LEFTOVER CRACK/CHOKING VICTIM by way of (maybe) the LAWRENCE ARMS style punk with a shit-ton of "whoas" deserves to get shitcanned. I'd be much more interested in hearing them develop and work on a style all their own than play this because it's clear that they can play their instruments. (P$)
(GFN)

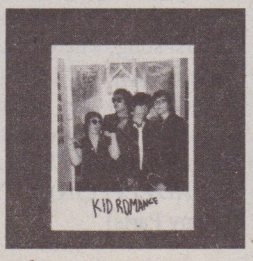
HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Load" LP

HOMOSTUPIDS. An LP. There's a song called "The Intern." Correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't they come out with an LP called *The Intern*, on Parts Unknown, last year? Presumably it had a song called "The Intern" on it. What do you want me to do with this, guys? The one-sheet









that came with your LP says your key markets are Cleveland and New York. Does a band like the HOMOSTUPIDS have key markets? A short guy came up to me at a show last week and asked if I liked the HOMOSTUPIDS, and I didn't really have an answer. The *Brutal Birthday* 7" sucked balls, but the rest were listenable (maybe the wrong word), and the only people who like that FACTORYMEN 7" are kiss-asses. This LP is actually OK; it sounds like a mix between the ANGRY SAMOANS and FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS but it's from Cleveland. If that short guy wants to ask me that question again I can give him a straighter answer: They're pretty OK. (BB)
(Load)

THE HORROR – "Spoils of War" LP

No umlauts here. This is the ex-VOORHEES band from the UK, not the Spanish one. Members of the band also played in IRONSIDE and IMBALANCE. Being a VOORHEES fan, I was stoked get this for review and equally happy upon listening to it. These guys primarily draw their inspiration from the more aggressive crop of '80s USHC bands (NEGATIVE APPROACH, CRO-MAGS, POISON IDEA, SSD). They perform this style exceptionally, with all the drive and fury you'd expect from ex-members of VOORHEES. Never listened to their previous record. Now I want to. Possibly one of my favorite HC records this year. (DB)
(Zandor)

THE HOSTILES – "Always Looking Forward" CD

Poppy ska punk from the UK. This reminds me of REEL BIG FISH due to the slick vocals, horns, and wacky feel. The only saving grace would be good pop songs, which doesn't happen here. (RL)
(self-released)

IMPEDIMENTS – LP

Fuck me, this thing is beautiful. How four Berkeley teenagers could create a record so far advanced, so much greater most of the dreck their contemporaries are oozing out is a mystery to me, but I don't give a shit, I love it. '70s punk (*not* "'77 punk"), I guess you could call it, but why? Why call it anything? Call your dad and ask him for twelve bucks so you can go out and buy this. Twelve dollars is a lot of money. It's not enough money. The hooks in these fucking songs are gorgeous, I'm telling you, I got a goddam hard-on from these things. The end of the first song, where outta nowhere lead yapper comes in and sez "I wanna fuck LeAnn Rimes" (I hadda look her up, too), CHRIST I knew right then and there that these goddam cretins are the next LED ZEPPLIN (or at least the next DREAD ZEPPLIN). BUY IT YOU DOGS. (BB)
(Happy Parts)

THE INOCULATORS – "Home for the Holidays/Message in a Bottle"

It's not the INOCULATORS fault that I just spent two weeks in Japan getting my face melted by brilliant bands every single night. It's not their fault that this 45 is the first American record I've listened to since I got home, so I kinda feel bad for them, I admit. But it *is* their fault that they released this pile of donkey dicks and tried to pass it off as a punk record. There is nothing redeeming about it, in any way (and I've listened three times, just to make sure I ain't just being mean for the sake of being mean). Fourth-rate Southern California bar-punk at its worst, with one tongue-in-cheek "fuck the family" holiday song backed up with a POLICE cover that makes me fucking wince. Their bio says that the drummer did time in REAGAN SS and F-MINUS. Really? Dude, you should know better. (WN)
(self-released)

IRON LUNG – "Exposed" EP

Did anyone read that thing in *Distort* zine about one-sided releases? A slap in the face to the environment (that was fucking hilariously raw) and a tool of the elite!? Brilliant, and almost as brilliant as these three songs in sequence. *Holy fuck*. The new one-sided 7" from IRON LUNG is comprised of inner-terror mantras and life's brutal games displayed the way only IRON LUNG is able to scare out of hardcore. The title track is a pounding set-up, full of the abuse one is relentlessly *exposed* (hehe) to in an encounter with these shut-in, disease- and abuse-ridden releases. The middle track is a SEX/VID cover, "No Room", and is seamlessly executed as another extension of the band's power over music. They end with a signature IRON LUNG track incorporating the weight of depression and regret through the varied hyper pummeling and meat-grinding sludge. As for the cover song, which I snickered at before hearing because of the SEX/VID association—it absolutely *kills*. I would go so far as to say it is the standout track on the record. It provides a needed sonic shift to the line-up here and either way you look at the idea of covering a "working band's" song—"No Room" has its place with IRON LUNG. Right between "Exposed" and "Nothing" lie the deposits of misguided and over-nourished hopes. The only reason IRON LUNG should ever cover another band's song is to destroy it, co-opt it, and make it theirs. Checkmate. (RM)
(Iron Lung)

IRON LUNG/WALLS/PIG HEART TRANSPLANT – "Public Humiliation" LP

I'm counting my lucky stars to have received this one for review. Not a three-way compilation, but a three-way collaboration. A hardcore *threesome* if you will. Recorded live on Halloween of 2008, this record has members of all three bands performing versions of songs by each and two new songs. The performance is dead-on perfect, which is pretty remarkable considering it's live and there are six people contributing. Skull-crushing and lurching and heavy and brutal and just as intense as you could possibly imagine. Highest recommendations! (VL)
(Iron Lung)

IRON REMINDERS – "Cut at the Root" LP

Circle-pit-inspiring, melodic moshing hardcore circa 2001 would be the best way to describe this. This band is a "former members of" band, with the most notable being KUNG FU RICK and HE WHO CORRUPTS. If that's your thing, you might want to grab this right away—I think FUCKED UP is the only band that presses fewer records than this one, which happens to be limited to 100. $10 ppd from Plastic Airlines. (BD)
(Plastic Airlines)

JETBOYS – "Jet Jet Jet!!" CD

It's good to see that the JETBOYS are still at it and mightier than ever. Still worshipping at the altar of JOHNNY THUNDERS and still managing to make that and other inspirations (N.B. as the JETBOYS are indeed inspired) into something fresh, brash, and genuine. Add to that ability their "anything for fun" attitude (several of the photos in the CD book put me in conniptions) that is the crucial ingredient X that separates them from the many clueless careerist bands cluttering up the world, and you've got success in CD form. (DD)
(Ultra-Vybe)

JUST DIE! – "Garages & Basements" EP

Here's a six-track EP of super energetic hardcore from that open-minded oasis in the Deep South known as Asheville. Geographically caught between the melodic emo capital of Gainesville, Florida, and the hardcore beatdown spots of the East Coast cities to the north, JUST DIE captures these two sounds in an impressive blend that really works. The band is tight, with killer guitar licks and great drumming, and the singer has an especially conspicuous, raspy voice that carries them one step above the pack of current hardcore sounds. Think of a slightly tougher STRIKE ANYWHERE or a slightly more emo version of CARRY ON, and you'll get the idea. I can see these dudes getting big. (BG)
(Dead End)

KAMIKAZE – "The Spirit of Battle" LP

This LP collects this New Jersey's bands previous releases—a 7", a split 7", and one comp track, all recorded in '03 and '04. The material was remastered for this release and the

sound is great for the split material, but just a little thin on their earlier stuff. KAMIKAZE mostly plays fast early-'80s USHC. They like to have some fucked-up breakdown or off-kilter part to mix it up, but this tends to lose momentum instead of adding rad craziness. To their credit, the songs are short so even one that doesn't quite work is over before I can get bummed. This ain't an essential reissue—this band would certainly be better in smaller dose— but there is some decent thrash to be had. (JM)
(Soul Rebel)

KID ROMANCE – "Fuck Punx/I Use Electricity" EP

Quick single from Boston's KID ROMANCE that sounds like it was recorded in an outhouse on top of a fourteener. Personally, my authentic-incompetence meter is quite a bit off, so the flavorless, lo-fi, toned-down indie rock is lost on me here, and I'm usually a sucker for charming. (AL)
(Captured Tracks)

KILL DEVILLE – "Octane" CD

This is a really crude and out-of-touch version of punk that is totally unappealing to me. The music here belongs to the embarrassing period of time when goatees, Dickies jackets, bad tattoos, and a clueless lust for something more punk than JUGHEAD'S REVENGE dominated a kid's existence. Unfortunately, by the looks of these guys in the CD jacket, this isn't a pre-adolescent first band/coming of age snafu. I hope they never put out another piece of recorded music ever again. (RM)
(Malted Soda)

THE LAWRENCE ARMS – "Buttsweat and Tears" EP

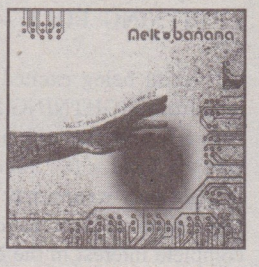
The word "punk" has always been difficult to define as it means many different things to many different people. This record, though, helps define what punk is by being an example of what is not punk. The word "punk" should never even loosely be associated with this band and these songs. This is music for the children of the soccer moms—the pre-teens of suburbia with undeveloped taste—that by way of shopping at Hot Topic, think that this is punk. This is the alternative to Britney Spears for the boys. But this is not punk, not underground, and should not be covered by this publication. It doesn't deserve to be insulted by me—it shouldn't grace the smudged print of these pages. To make matters even more insulting to me, for what this music is and who it is for, it still sounds like utter fucking shit. The title *Buttsweat and Tears* doesn't relate to the songs included but was presumably titled as a cheeky play on blood, sweat and tears, but do I really even need to say that it's not funny and completely stupid? Perhaps Beavis and Butthead would find the title funny, but they aren't the ones that read this magazine. The artwork features images of drinks and I can only assume that pictures of beer somehow seem rebellious to the eleven-year-old at the mall with this record in hand. The little note from the band in the liner notes states, "We'd thank a lot of bands, companies and people, but we're total assholes, entitled, selfish, aloof, and frankly, cooler than all them. So suffice it to say, get fucked." Directly across from this note is a thank you list twice as long as the liner notes. The stupidity offends me beyond words. The lyrics are worse than the liner notes. I wish the band's third-grade English teacher would review the lyrics instead of me. I assume (or at least hope) they would not be pleased with the results of their former pupil. Unfortunately they look better in print than being sung, as the singer's voice is painful to listen to. The music and songs are extremely uninteresting and poorly assembled, even for pop music targeted at suburban kids. As is the case with a lot of pop-punk recordings, the bass is high in the mix and sounds very boring playing along the same notes as the guitar. I have a strong suspicion that the only ones reading this that disagree with me are members of this band or work at Fat Wreck Chords. I don't think the little kids at the mall that like this band read this magazine and I'm pretty sure the people that do like *Maximum Rocknroll* don't like this band. But by continuing to print reviews of bands like this in magazines like this one only further justifies the claim to punk by posers like the LAWRENCE ARMS and Fat Wreck Chords. I'm not angry that music like this exists but it should not exist in my world. This is not punk, this is not underground. This is bad music labeled and presented as punk to kids that have cash to burn at the mall. (MU)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

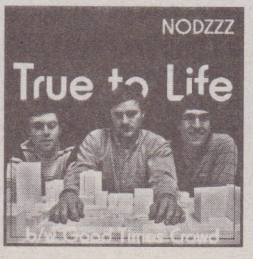
THE LEGENDARY SAN DIEGO CHARGERS / SUNNYSIDE – split EP

Terrible band name (though it could be worse—they could be called the DENVER BRONCOS…), though I'm glad to report that their music is a lot better than their choice of moniker. Snotty street-punk meets melodic LEATHERFACE-influenced punk. It has a nice jangly sound to it—it sounds a little like NOTHINGTON and TILTWHEEL's later stuff. Good. SUNNYSIDE sounds looser and screechy. They sound old, like Lookout! comps old. I like it. Three songs from each band, LSDC win it.. (AD)
(It's Alive)

LIKE WOLVES – "Paths" EP

This is the first release the band is not calling a demo, apparently. I think I reviewed their last 7" ("demo") and remember it more for its awesome cover than the songs. I knew what I was in for when I threw this one on, though—they did make enough of a musical impression the first time around for that much. The four tracks on this release vary enough to keep their layered, modern-intensity sound fresh and do not bleed into one long, proggy mess. Although these guys' sound may just be a little too "developed" for my liking, I totally would go ape shit had I the chance to see them live. I probably won't spin this EP too often in *my* bedroom, but hear what I'm sayin' here. LIKE WOLVES place themselves respectfully in the area between a more-together SOME GIRLS and a falling-apart HOPE CONSIRACY. They really lose me with the last track though. It may just be that both songs on the B-side are simply over my head, but "Grandeur" reeks of the long-forgotten scent of AT THE DRIVE IN, or possibly an AT THE DRIVE IN trainwreck with late-era CAVE IN. All in all a good listen though, and if any above-mentioned bands interest you, buy this self released EP and support; I doubt you'll regret going out on this limb. (RM)
(self-released)





LIPONA – "Pigeonholed" CD

A five-song EP from this Florida band. Certainly no lack of musicianship here, with a mix of FACE TO FACE, SHUDDER TO THINK, and the rock-ish doodlings of A WILHELM SCREAM. Decent for an EP with anthemic, well produced songs that put LIPONA in the contenders category for The Next Big Thing on the Epitaph/Fat scene front. (RL)
(Bear Trap)

LIGHTNING BOLT – "Earthly Delights" LP

I recall being excited about the second album from LIGHTNING BOLT (*Ride the Skies*) before it was released, almost a decade ago. I saw the band a few times live back then and thought they were pretty cool. Then their third and fourth albums were released and I lost complete interest in the band. A few years ago a friend gave me a free ticket to a LIGHTNING BOLT show and I decided to go. I think I walked out on them around the third song, bored as hell and disgusted by the mob of hipsters that were having their minds blown. I was curious and skeptical of this record and am happy to say mostly good things about it. It has the distinctive LIGHTNING BOLT sound but it's more psychedelic than their previous releases and less prog-rockesque. It's noisier and less jammy, though they do jam on a riff here and there. There are not really any standout songs that are the obvious best cut on the record, but it's a very solid album of mostly good songs. It's reassuring to see a band that has a specific sound that has been around for over a decade make a record that is still interesting. I think my problem with the third and fourth albums was simply that they seemed to be more of the same. This one is not drastically different than the other albums but just different enough to make me happy. (MU)
(Load)

LOVE COLLECTOR – "My Baby Goes Waaah!" EP

This is a nice little disc. Imagine taking the energy, pace, and even some of the goofiness of SWEET BABY JESUS and then give it a little '60s garage spin. I was a little worried at first, because the sleeve looks like the band might be a little slick. They are definitely a little slick, but not in a slick kind of way. I like to use the term punk'n'roll a lot and this will get filed right into that category. With former members of the DIRTY SWEETS and the FELLS, it's no surprise these cats kick ass. (KK)
(Big Action)

LOW RED CENTER – "Trace Elements" 10"

Synthesizer sex music with a heavy weirdo German electro influence and bored female voices. Think FLYING LIZARDS, or a less detached GINA X PERFORMANCE. It gets a little STEREOLAB here and there but for the most part it stays pretty avant-garde. Almost moments of NATIVE HIPSTERS if they were entirely drowned in built-in drumbeats and sine waves. Not dancing music. Driving through depressed desolation of the desert. Seeing the quiet joy in exploring through it. Exactly. (MM)
(S-S)

MALADIE – LP

MALADIE are from Mexico, and are not to be confused with the post-PG. 99 band MALADY from Virginia, or with any other band with a similar name. I just wanted to get that out of the way. Anyhow, this MALADIE plays modern screamo with crusty influences, like a darker COMADRE. Not what I normally listen to, but really good for what it is. The first 100 copies are on blue vinyl, so if you're collector scum like me you should get on ASAP. (VX)
(Penguin Suit / Great Plains / Ethospine Noise)

MELT BANANA – "Melt Banana Lite Live: ver.0.0" CD

Everyone by now must know Japanese noise/chaos/fastcore/art punk maniacs MELT BANANA—their appeal in Japan and abroad has expanded well beyond typical punk circles. Allow me to introduce you to MELT BANANA LITE, which is anything but a kinder and/or gentler MELT BANANA. Back story: the band switched drummers a while back, and the new guy couldn't make a few of the shows they had agreed to play, so they made do with a drum machine. Now, when they play with the drum machine instead of the dude, they call it MELT BANANA LITE. If you ever thought that MELT BANANA's attack was just a little bit too nice and clean, this is your fucking jam. All of the chaos you are used to, all of the shrieking vocals, all of the blasts of noise, but now add in even more electronic blips and whirs and textbook precision that can only come from a computer. This is for everyone who thought that MELT BANANA was just a little bit too "palatable" and "normal"; this disc is off the fucking wall, and it rules. Recorded live in Tokyo in summer 2009, and it sounds perfect. (WN)
(A-Zap)

MILKMAN – "15 Years of Hell" 2xCD

A pretty ripping "retrospective" here from this Dutch band that has been around the block for, well, fifteen years. I use quotes 'cause the first disc contains nine new tunes and eleven re-recorded versions of older ones, so this is basically their fifth album. I think my roommate played one of their LPs for me just last month, other than that this band is new to me. I like this, a lot. The songs are quite fast, tight as hell, and really basic in a good way. Classic meat 'n' potatoes, the way this type of hardcore should be. There are the occasional metal flairs thrown in here and there like speed-picking and such, but it helps the cause. The OUT COLD of Europe? Perhaps. But more in the way that OUT COLD never really got much recognition 'til the '90s HC revival took hold. And hell, I personally like the sound of the 41 (!) live tracks on disc two better. The guitar sounds rawer and certain notes come through better. (JU)
(Shield)

MINUS APES – "It's All the Same" EP

Ah, that perfect jangly hardcore punk guitar riff. Not too many bands can capture it, but these fuckers know how to hit it, and my ears perked and eyebrow raised in curiosity immediately as I threw this on. The plain white cover didn't give me a clue that this would be so good, but then again, the SKEWBALD EP had a similar aesthetic; hell, that band could be a slight influence in MINUS APES' sound as well. Disillusioned by society, the band takes a detached attitude expressed with snarled vocals and a manic sound falling between pure punk and raw hardcore. And man, these German go-nowheres know how to make some perfect punk rock and roll. I want to say this is total early-'80s-inspired hardcore, but there is so much else going on that I can't write it off that simply. HJERTESTOP comes to mind when I try to think of something similar. It's new but it sounds sorta old. Or maybe it sounds old-school but it also sounds fresh and new. Whatever, I want to move to Europe! (BG)
(Thrashbastard)

THE MISFITS – "Max's Kansas City, New York 12/20/1978" LP

Why? Yet another bootleg release of a live MISFITS recording for all the über-fans out there… Either that, or maybe Glenn Danzig is slipping his own stash of live recordings into production to make a quick buck and to stick it to Doyle!! Regardless, I do have to admit that this is one of the better-quality live recordings of the MISFITS that I've heard, so for a fan that is a completist, this is definitely worth checking out! You get a bunch of classics on this cool yellow vinyl record including many fan favorites like "Bullet," "Attitude," "We Are 138," "Teenagers from Mars," hell…all the songs on this are classics! There are even some funny moments of in-between song banter including a brief, very ELVIS-like rendition of "Blue Christmas" and a messed-up intro to "Horror Business." All in all, this is a good representation of what a live show might have sounded like, but good luck in finding a copy since I couldn't even tell you who put this out! (ML)
(bootleg)

MOBY DICKS – "Ballad of the Red Dog" EP

From Alberta, Canada, the MOBY DICKS kick off their vinyl debut (four of these songs are from their tour-only CDR) with a raw but catchy song about a diner with cheap hot dogs. I approve! Overall they're punker than some of the poppier bands getting so much attention in the garage/TermBo world, which is a goddamn relief. Proof that it's possible to write catchy punk songs without sounding like a bullshit college rock band or some eighth-generation RAMONES knockoff. Well done! They mix it up a bit with a short, snotty song ("Fuck Off Baby") and an homage to HUBBLE BUBBLE. (IS)
(Mammoth Cave)

MOHORAM ATTA / THOU – "Degradation of Human Life" split LP

17-old me would most likely be way stoked on the MOHORAM ATTA side of this split but the 31-year old, not so much. It's competent and all, but I just can't handle the metal as much. Very heavy tunes that often fall back to sludgy doom crawl between the faster and mid-tempo parts. THOU, on the other side, have more of an EYEHATEGOD vibe. It's heavy and doomy, there is somewhat of a swamp feel (well, they are from New Orleans), and a looseness that makes these tunes not sound so "serious." (JU)
(Halo of Flies)

THE MOJOMATICS – "Another Cheat on Me/Down by the Graveyard"

Douchemaster comes through again, this time with a late-'70s-style power-pop band that is reminiscent of some of the stuff that used to appear on the Chiswick label, given the sort of bluesy influence. Extending the late-'70s bluesy/power-pop comparison, this reminds me of EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS. This is some quality shit right here. (KK)
(Douchemaster)

MORNE – LP+7"

This record has been so long in the making, and I find it hard to believe that it is every bit as brilliant as I hoped it would be. The background on MORNE is that the guitarist and main songwriter for Poland's FILTH OF MANKIND moved to the US several years back, and has been sorting through band members working on this new project for almost as long. There was a CD demo a while back that No Options pressed to vinyl in a criminally limited quantity, but this LP is what MORNE has been building up to. Five songs of dark and moody ferocity that remind me why I've kinda fallen off the NEUROSIS bandwagon for the last decade or so. MORNE just have so much fucking *power* that even though the record is slow and mostly repetitive, I'm completely lulled, jaw agape, until a mid-tempo double-bass-driven song like "Force" assaults my ears with ferocity thought reserved for the likes of AXEGRINDER. The thing about this record is that on first listen, it appears pretty simple. And on the surface it is quite simple indeed—none of the riffs are terribly complex, and the structure follows well-established punk/metal formulas—but there are so many layers to this LP (and the accompanying two-song EP…you get all seven tracks if you go the CD route) and every time I listen, I hear something new that I missed the times before. While the metal overtones are pretty blatant, MORNE clearly has an affinity for dark '80s bands like the MISSION and FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM, the latter making a better comparison than perhaps any modern band could. This is a dark-and-stormy-night kind of record, and it's put together perfectly. Well worth the wait. (WN)
(Feral Ward)

MUDLARK – LP

This is a cool record. Has a mid-'80s, DINOSAUR JR/EMBARASSMENT/REPLACEMENTS/later HÜSKER DÜ, feel to it, but does not copy too much of one band. Just sort of loner, gray-weather music, very melancholy-esque. Reminds me of Olympian bands like GUN OUTFIT and MILK MUSIC. I even hear a bit of NEIL YOUNG in this. Insert is a photo of big amps and a huge skeleton or fossil of a wicked sea creature or pre-historic snake with bones! Limited, one-time pressing of 500 copies. (VL)
(Fun With Smack)

NEEDLES – "Desastre" EP

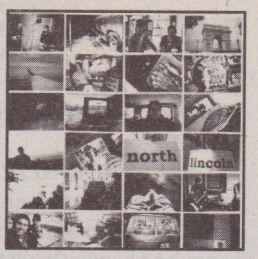
I did a good job of wearing down the grooves of NEEDLES' last 7" and have been anticipating the vinyl for this one since the day they recorded it. *Desastre* has finally made its way into my hands, and after a few listens I have no doubt that it will get abused just as much as NEEDLES' first effort. The obsessive treatment that the band gives these songs is impressive. The opening track "Comatose" viciously introduces the 7" with a perfect, hectic hardcore riff, and then continues to pummel until the song's end when the mood changes to a slower pounding, which seamlessly transitions into the mid-tempo hardcore noise-littering of "Iconoclast." And the madness doesn't let up—the frenzied song structures, brilliant rhythmic interplay, and squealing guitar parts are gonna need way more time and attention to fully absorb. I'm ready and willing to let the songs on *Desastre* disturb my psyche and I'm bummed that this is likely NEEDLES' last artifact. (CI)
(Lengua Armada)

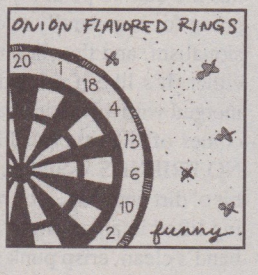
NIGHT FEVER – "New Blood" LP

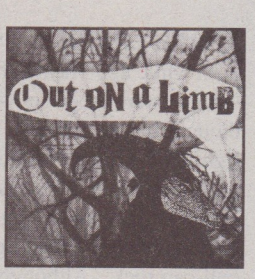
Newer Danish band that is extremely energetic live and delivered a stellar performance when I saw them. On record, the songs have the pace of hardcore, but the vocalist has such a rock'n'roll delivery that it sounds like just that; of course the guitars and production cater to that sound as well. I can see many getting into this, especially since tons of punks shifted towards the rockin' realm of musical styles. If you like heavy doses of rock with moments of GUNS 'N' ROSES vocals, you definitely may want to pick this up. If you are one who can't stand the "rock," you may want to skip out on it, but you be the judge. (MS)
(Adult Crash)

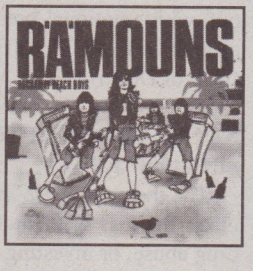
NITAD – "Ni Borjar Minnena Komma Tillbaka" EP

NITAD are wild Swedish punk rockers possessed by a maniacal rock and roll demon that has his claws buried deep in their neck! We have known for years that Stockholm and its immediate hinterlands were a breeding ground for punk-rock mayhem. NITAD's new release on No Way confirms our suspicions. This four song 7" is a blazing triumph for NITAD!! You get sheer punk power accompanied by some melodic bits where you are able to catch your breath. The guitar playing is out of this world!









This EP is highly recommended! (BR)
(No Way)

NODZZZ – "True to Life/Good Times Crowd"

Local boys NODZZZ bring us a nice little two-tuner that would give any failing Mission party a good kick up its thrift-store arse. It's jumpy and bouncy whilst still holding on to that early KINKS jangle. It's so easy to throw these boys in with are current Bay Area lo-fi garage explosion, but an abundance of C86 charm and some CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN wit sets them slightly apart. Great. (SD)
(What's Your Rupture?)

NO FRIENDS – LP

NO FRIENDS is toying with a mix of DAG NASTY, ADOLESCENTS, MINOR THREAT, and some other traditional introductory punk bands. There are some catchy parts throughout, but the classic punk style that these dudes are going for is generally at odds with their professionalism, and the slick recording doesn't help either. It's like if a band on No Way Records merged with a No Idea band, and at times it just comes off like typical Fat Wreck-styled punk. NO FRIENDS would definitely benefit from a bit o' dirt and slop, 'cos my record needle is being lifted in an apparent allergic reaction to the band's clean, crisp punk stylings. (CI)
(No Idea)

NORTH LINCOLN – "Sick of Sorrys" EP

A while ago I heard someone call these guys "Midwestern beer-belly despair rock" and I thought it was hilarious and totally hit the nail right on the head. Nothing could describe these guys any better—because there is a difference between the aforementioned genre and the closely related "Beer-belly, beard, and baseball-cap rock." Although the two are musically similar, the message is different. This is pop-punk but kind of slowed down and bummed out, with emotional breakdowns. Kind of like an emo OFF WITH THEIR HEADS. (FS)
(Kiss of Death)

NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR – "Total Annihilation" EP

The theme to these three tracks seems to be either the loss of mental acuity resulting from drug abuse, or investing one's life in this rotten system. From the tour diaries I've read, these kids would fucking know about the "narcotic stupor, consensual demise." The A-side has two burly, driving crust numbers, with only one mid-tempo stomp-athon part. The flip also hits like a cement tsunami. If you can't get enough crucial crust madness, you're pro'lly down with these kids and Plague Bearer anyway, but if not this is a fine place to start. (JM)
(Plague Bearer)

NYMPHETS – "I See" EP

I got excited to see a TROGGS cover here, and not one of the most obvious ones ("With a Girl Like You"). They handle it well enough, but overall the NYMPHETS leave me cold, baby. Simple, lo-fi pop that would probably turn on NODZZZ fans. (IS)
(Signed By Force)

ONION FLAVORED RINGS – "Funny" EP

I've always been really impressed by ONION FLAVORED RINGS' vocal melodies. With the simple rhythms of Steve and Paul's stringed partnership and Erick's sharp drumming, the songs are super sing-songy, almost like nursery rhymes, which creates an incredibly satisfying listening experience. *Funny* is just another excellent presentation from this Bay Area pop-punk outfit that met in Amsterdam in 1972 at the squat that the RFA fled to at the peak of their infamy. Which is also funny. (HD)
(Thrillhouse)

OUT ON A LIMB – "Drinking Spree" EP

It's nine o'clock on a Thursday night, two of my favorite bands are playing across town, and I'd definitely rather be on a drinking spree than sitting here reviewing a record called "Drinking Spree." Still, it could be worse; this is a solid little EP. Four songs of darkly melodic, catchy punk with elements of bands like the OBSERVERS, the ESTRANGED, and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. The vocals have a great, detached quality while sharp yet simple guitar leads punctuate the verses. Good stuff. (AM)
(Destination Unknown)

PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE BAND – "Shockwave Rider/Bad Politics"

I remember the '80s, too well. Obviously PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE BAND does too. Noisy rock (what used to be called "college rock" back then) tapping into the soul of SONIC YOUTH complete with flat, semi-rhyming vocals and wildly wanky guitar parts. The B-side sounds like Chris Reed of RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY jamming with SONIC YOUTH. At least it is different from what most bands are cranking out these days. (CK)
(Hozac)

THE PSYCHO KID – "Hypocrite Land" CD

Illinois does RAMONES-influenced melodic punk rock like nowhere else, and THE PSYCHO KID from Elgin carries on the fine tradition. Reminiscent of the LILLINGTONS, these guys kick out some great short blasts of pop-punk the way it should be done; fast, hook-laden, and with that wall-of-noise guitar sound. Most important is that they've got the hooks; at least one person in the band knows how to write a tune. This is as great as anything on, say, Red Scare right now—these guys (a girl and two blokes) are really, really good. According to their website, this is their first release (after a couple of demos...good for them for waiting until they were ready to release an album instead of releasing their demos as CDs like half the bands out there). I look forward to hearing more from them. Awesome. (AD)
(Logan Ave.)

PYGMY SHREWS – "The Egyptian" LP

It's hard to believe that only three people are making all this noise. Juggernaut distorted art-core like a bunch of Gravity Records bands siphoned off some petrol from JESUS LIZARDS' van, put it into a DeLorean, went back in time, and signed to SST during the later FLAG/early SONIC YOUTH/SWA period. I don't know if this is genuinely as awesome as the concept I've just described, but it's pretty good nonetheless. I truly hope they are able to generate this kind of racket in a live situation. (AM)
(Wantage)

THE QUESTIONMARKS – "Boo! I'm A Ghost!" CD

From Japan, this band is a weird amalgam of '70s hard rock with electronic sound effects noises. Spazzed-out sounds with glam stylings. Maybe if I knew what the singer was talking about, it would make more sense. They claim to have "self-released more than ten albums since 2007." Yikes! (CK)
(Tokyo No)

RAH – "The Truth Will Reveal Itself" EP

Labeled Records outta the poppin' Toronto scene picked up and put out the second EP from RAH, the city's moshiest brats I've heard to date. I'll attribute the tight and agitated songs to the cold, cuz they must spend hour after hour, day after day snowed in at the practice space jamming and bustin' a two-step to keep warm. The eight-song record sent in came on sweet turquoise vinyl but apparently there is a nine-color pressing of this release (holy excess!), as well as a *free* downloadable version of the EP available online. Good work on that front. As far as the music is concerned, RAH come 'atcha with a wild energy and solid, danceable tunes. Tormented, kinda snotty vocals tread the tired territory of personal hell/dead relationships/negative struggle lyrics. Musically, they get down with some good riffs played by a crisp, zippy guitar but tend to keep the songs in a weird, mild middle ground between ripping and mid-pace badassness. They unfortunately lack the teeth thus far to really sink in and distinguish themselves as a force to be fucked with. Their record doesn't quite creep past the subtle limitations its imposed on itself; with that said though, I'd be interested to hear their first 7" to see where they were coming from, knowing they've ended up here. I certainly appreciated this record

further after repeat listens and would recommend if you're into TRASH TALK or New Jersey's SEASICK. (RM)
(Labeled)

RAINCOATS – LP

I remember reading an interview with John Lydon where he asserted that the only music that came out of the initial burst of punk that he considered true to his idea of punk was made by the SLITS and the RAINCOATS. Of course, every time you read about the RAINCOATS' first record, Kurt Cobain's name is mentioned, since he used his star-power to forced Geffen to reissue it in the early '90s. Simon Reynolds in his book about women in music claims that the RAINCOATS are the only true "female" music, whatever that means. It's interesting to me that it takes all these male voices to give credence to this sound: "Hey, what these wimmin are doing is *real*, maaaaan." At any rate, what *does* it sound like? Palmolive's drumming is at once grounded and skittish; she was perhaps the most learned musician in the band, since she had previously played with the SLITS. The rest of the band learned while playing together, and you get that feeling from the sound. It's confident and unified, a complete idea, while at the same time sort of questioning what that togetherness means, with a shaky unnerving feel and unsettling lyrics. The guitar sound is in shards, deconstructed—not intentionally but by necessity. The way the voices interact with each other is so exciting, like a million ideas at once. "Don't take it personal, I choose my own fate / I follow love, I follow hate..." It isn't a monolithic idea of music, of women's voices; it's fractured and contradictory, questioning rather than providing a pat answer. This record is a classic and it represents a band at their peak with their own strong voice and idea of music; it's the kind of sound that will either alienate you or make you want to exist inside of it. It makes me happy that it's available once more, so that all the future punk girls can pick it up and be transformed, make their own secret bedroom sounds. (LG)
(Kill Rock Stars)

R'A'MOUNS – "Rockaway Beach Boys" CD

A CD of RAMONES-style covers of BEACH BOYS songs. The music isn't bad, but it's a little too slow and the vocals are kind of weak. (P$)
(Wolverine)

RAZORS IN THE NIGHT – "Carry On!" 10"

Eight tracks of boisterous punk from Boston with gravelly Dicky Barrett-ish vocals, a toughened mix of melody, fast hardcore edges, and huge sing-along choruses. While it's sturdy mix of all those elements, by straddling such a diverse mix it's never as brutal as the tough vocals, never as melodic as some of the solid riffs or sing-alongs, or never as rocked out as some of the guitar solos. It's delivered solidly enough to probably smooth out any wrinkles at a live show. Lyrics about hating music hipsters, being broke, and conforming to the punk and skinhead lifestyle, and being out on the town, wearing and lacing up the boots! Absolutely beautiful, well-designed gatefold record and packaging. (KS)
(Longshot)

REGRETS – "Hope Floats and So Does Shit" EP

This is really good distortion-drenched crusty hardcore that's heavy as hell. A band like this could share a stage with anyone from EYEHATEGOD to CURSED to IN DISGUST and be equally at ease and well-received. I couldn't find any information about them anywhere, and this came with no contact info and no reviewer copy, so I'll be doing my damnedest to find one for myself as soon as possible. You should do the same. (VX)
(Fuck This!)

RESTLESS KNIGHTS – "I Wish I Was a Terrorist" CD

This is a six-song CDEP of thick-necked, full-throated hardcore from Sweden. It's extremely modern sounding, in that everything sounds massive; they have that ultra-compressed, radio-ready sound, but it doesn't quite fit their fast songs. The vocals are great: pissed off, guttural, and raw, like pre-Matador FUCKED UP. Pretty decent CD. (AM)
(Eidsjal)

RESTLESS KNIGHTS – "A Quick Fix" EP

Boston amazing-core by way of Sweden played by ex-members of bands I have never heard of. Pretty standard stuff for this style: polished, heavy guitars, fast, shouted vocals, etc. Kind of in one ear and out the other. Sorry, guys. (VL)
(Eldsjal)

THE RIZILLOS – " La Sin Potencia No Es Control" LP

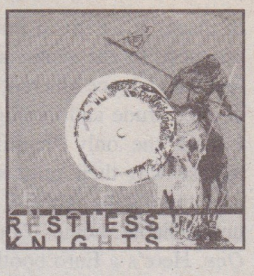
Christ, you got some big Spanish balls to name your band this, or you're just plain dumb, but as me granny always said, "Let the music do the talking, son." First it comes off sounding almost like a low-budget lost Killed By Death relic, whilst mixing in some jerky Brazilian post-punk à la OS MUTANTES. A little bit of JILTED JOHN and a sneaky touch of the HATEPINKS manages to worm its way in, managing to take a trip to Italy and help itself to a touch of the INTELLIGENCE. I dig it... But that bloody name. (SD)
(Bowery)

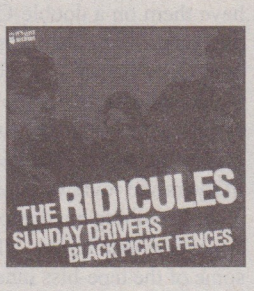
ROYAL TURDS – "The Secret Record Society" CD

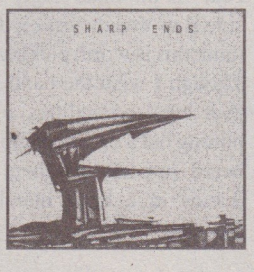
Oh great, a band called the ROYAL TURDS. I'm sure you could imagine my enthusiasm when I saw this CD in my review pile. But my sarcasm and cynicism were immediately eradicated when I threw this on and surprisingly found myself listening to some pretty fine punk rock and roll with a slight '60s garage influence. While obviously not taking themselves too seriously, the tunes are super catchy in a STARLITE DESPERATION-meets-early-HIVES kind of way, and the lyrics—while off the beaten path and slightly off-kilter—are pretty awesome. Putting all these observations together, particularly with the weird album cover, I would have to conclude that a slight bout of insanity and a large supply of drugs have served as some sort of influence with this band. This is a good thing. Don't let the silly name stop you from checking them out. (BG)
(Red Lounge)

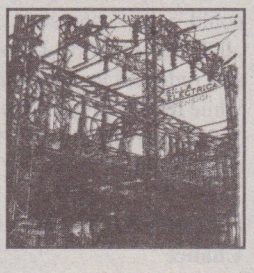
SCREAMERS – "Live at the Mabuhay Gardens 9/2/78" LP

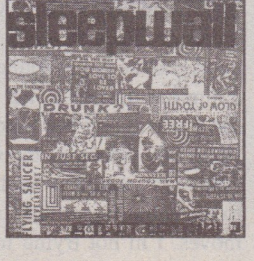
Are the SCREAMERS the only synth-punk band that were actually punk? Their music is aggressive and creepy;











in places it's hard to imagine that the sounds produced by the synths aren't guitars. You can feel the violence inherent in the sound, which is at once crude and intelligent, brutal and witty. I think the only "legitimate" SCREAMERS release was their must-see Target video, and now there's the recently reissued DVD of the unwatchable movie Tomata made, *Population One*. Here's a Euro bootleg of the same songs that have been bootlegged a million times—I have them on a double-CD that came in a purple paper digipak in the early '00s, and that LP with Gary Panter's SCREAMERS logo on the cover that emerged in the same period. This one comes with an insert featuring a cool *Melody Maker* interview with the band and a selection of flyers and reviews. The SCREAMERS didn't record anything but demos, so the sound quality is never gonna be A+ (plus it's a bootleg), but some of the tape-hiss inherent on the aforementioned LP I own has gone, and "122 Hours of Fear" is not annoyingly split up on side A and side B as was the case with that previous boot. I think this is worth picking up if you can find it... Though I wish the band would untangle whatever legal wranglings are keeping them from putting out a decent comprehensive reissue. I've heard rumors that there are more unreleased demos in a band member's archive... (LG)
(bootleg)

SCROTUM POLES – "Auchmithie Forever" LP

A gang of bored bedroom-jamming Dundee teenagers, SCROTUM POLES were destined to be yet another also-ran footnote until their legend was resurrected courtesy of CDR archivists like *Messthetics*, and whoever put out the *Kilt By Death* triple-CD of jockpunk obscurities. They only had one vinyl release, but this LP compiles tracks from various cassette releases. It's shambolic, out-of-tune DIY pop in the vein of the DESPERATE BICYLES, et al. There's no doubt in my mind that these neds could write a pop song, but their songs sound all the better for the Dansette production values and rudimentary musical chops. A very worthwhile reissue project, I just hope the pressing of 500 is enough. (AM)
(Dulc-i-Tone)

SHARP ENDS – "Northern Front/Ghosts of Chance"

The press release for this single notes that these Canucks sound similar to JOY DIVISION, and boy do they. At first I thought maybe it was just because the bass was hitting the high notes and the guitar sound just happened to have a familiar tone to it. I'll confess that I cheated (or, I was doing my homework) and looked at some live videos on the internet to confirm my suspicions, and was neither shocked nor happy to see some singer mocking Ian's epileptic bop moves. I'm not trying to put JOY DIVISION on a pedestal, but a band with such a distinct sound, style, and mood shouldn't be aped. No exceptions. It's boring and uninspired to copy a specific band, and even more so if hundreds of other bands have mimicked the same sounds over the past 29 years. But back to the record and the two tunes on it, had I not looked at the video nor read the label's bio describing a sound similar to JOY DIVISION, my description of the music would have read something like, "catchy, lo-fi JOY DIVISION-sounding music." I have no qualms saying that these two songs are in fact catchy and pretty cool, but if I ever want to hear music like this (which is almost every day, actually), then I'll listen to JOY DIVISION instead. (MU)
(Hozac)

SHARP ENDS – "Crack Trap/Loaded Hearts"

Calgary's SHARP ENDS are a dark pop outfit complete with hollowed-out Ian Curtis vocals. A mish-mash of styles that ends up being an unbalanced collision of MISSION OF BURMA, WIRE, and MAGAZINE. Fair enough influences, but it comes out the other side as unimaginative and flat. (AL)
(Mammoth Cave)

SHOW OF FORCE – CD

Metallic tough-guy HC in the vein of later HATEBREED mixed with some NYHC. The vocals seem a bit off to me, though, and too up-front in the mix. I'd rather be listening to *Satisfaction Is the Death of Desire*, or BULLDOZE. (VX)
(Real Recognizes Real)

SILLA ELECTRICA –"Tension" EP

Four more tracks on this band's third record. Nice snotty punk with dual vocals on a couple tracks that are well done. The effects on Clara's vocals are really great. "Tension" is completely killer, with rapid-fire singing and enough hooks to grab hold of you and never let go. Great punk record. (MS)
(Blondes Must Die)

SISSY SPACEK – "Gutter Splint" EP

A one-sided 7" with 22 tracks of noisecore. The sound is a combination of fastcore drums, screamed vocals, and electronic noise—short blasts of in-your-face noise-punk. John Wiese is the electronics/noise portion of the band and it's worth pointing out that he is an extremely eclectic and prolific noise/improviser/electronic/metal/punk musician. His list of projects and collaborations is massive. He's played with EVAN PARKER, PAIN JERK, KK NULL, WOLF EYES, METALUX, BASTARD NOISE, CATTLE DECAPITATION, and many, many others. On second listen I noticed that almost every track begins with drumstick clicks and that made me laugh. While this is extremely noisy, it isn't lo-fi and there are still songs. It's not just noise, it's noise-punk. Good stuff. (MH)
(Ketchup Cavern)

SLEEPWALL – "Is That Factual" EP

Who would have thought that DINOSAUR JR would turn out to be such an influential band in 2009? There seem to be a good handful of bands totally copping that style right now, but SPLEEPWALL pull it off well. This is cool in a total DINOSAUR JR-worship kind of way. Side A is definitely a jam. High energy with the drums playing super up-tempo while the guitar playing sorta down-tempo. They do some interesting stuff and it works really well for this song, and the breakdown at the end is the icing on the cake. Terrific. For the B-side they lose a bit of the energy that made the first song so appealing. It's OK, but a bit too dreary in a '90s alternative kind of way. (FS)
(Toxic Pop)

SOCIAL CIRCKLE – "City Shock" LP

I'm downright giddy to be reviewing this, as I've been loving the shit out of the copy I bought last week. I was only half into their other records (though I enjoyed their song on *No Bullshit #2*), but this is light-years ahead of their previous output. It's awesome but rare when a band's sound incorporates equal parts snotty hardcore and catchy garage punk, but SOCIAL CIRCKLE fucking nails it, and Christian's refreshingly intelligent lyrics that offer non-cliché social perspectives are a nice touch and a bit of a surprise for this style. These songs don't necessarily form a cohesive album, but they're definitely good enough to keep things interesting all the way through. As a side-note, it's especially impressive that half of this band is (sadly, was) in the BLANK STARE camp since both bands play top-notch music in completely different styles. Please, please, please come back to the Bay Area. (DG)
(No Way)

THE SONS OF HERCULES – "A Different Kind of Ugly" CD

The fifth record from this hard-rocking San Antonio, TX band. Taking their cues from the ROLLING STONES and the STOOGES and mixing that with their twisted Texas sensibilities, this record is a bit weird. But then again, it is straightforward. Kind of catchy, but a bit too cock-rock for me. (CK)
(Saustex Media)

SPECTRALS – "Leave Me Be/Suit Yourself"

It's amazing what passes as punk these days at this rag. Back in the day this fucker would have been flung in the bin followed by a Finnish hardcore palate cleansing. I don't give a fuck, punk is overrated. What we have here is dreamy lo-fi indie pop (or just google Termbo/HoZac if you're lost). The ex-garage head col-

lector twerps are all over this sound. Super stripped-down do-wop meets JESUS AND MARY CHAIN and fuckin' BUDDY HOLLY. It actually reminds me a little of the YOLKS who I raved about a while back. Sounds like I'm hating? Nope, this fucking rules... great songwriting, begging to be flipped and played again. (TB)
(Captured Tracks)

STRANGE ATTRACTOR – CD

Very shit-ily recorded full-length album of snotty garage punk music. It's actually kind of cool. Nothing about this record sounds good, but as a whole, it has some charm. All the songs are like 30 seconds long, and it's all nonsense with really stupid lyrics. This is a mess. (FS)
(Red Lounge)

STRESSED OUT / RIP IT UP – split EP

This split features two New Jersey bands who don't owe much of a debt to either MOUTHPIECE or RORSCHACH. RIP IT UP plays thrashcore in the vein of LIFE'S HALT or UZI SUICIDE mixed with some heavier influences. Good stuff. Their lyrics deal with straight edge, skating, and zombies. STRESSED OUT plays a style that varies between modern youth crew and fastcore with some guitar solos thrown in for good measure. Lyrics about the discrimination faced by immigrants, anthropocentricity, and social pressures. This is self-released by the bands, so contact them if you want a copy. (VX)
(self-released)

STRUNG OUT – "Agents of the Underground" LP

More super polished California "punk." Where other cultures and lands have alternative rock, indie pop, and new wave... California has Punk Lite. They still have that trademark Fat Wreck Chords mid-tempo melodic guitars and harmonies over breakneck-speed drumming. I liked stuff like this sixteen years ago, but it soon got old... or famous. I suppose this has been their job for some time now. Punk—nice alternative lifestyle, shitty career choice. (AD)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

SYSTEM FUCKER – "What Is Freedom?" EP

Shit, with my ears still ringing from D-CLONE's Bay Area gigs a couple of weeks ago, I am primed and ready for more noisy spiky Japanese hardcore. Being the slavering Crust War addict that I am, my personal copy arrived a while ago, but I'll gladly listen to this short-but-sweet platter all day. SYSTEM FUCKER is a little more regressive than some of their noisy contemporaries, riding a definite CRUDITY/DISCARD vibe, with expansive riffs and short frantic solos. The vox have a nice Kawakami-esque quality, crying out in desperation and supported with quality gang back-ups. The bass tone is fantastic—so low and primitive! A killer (un-listed) blistering cover of SHITLICKERS' "War System" is tacked on to the end of the record. As I expected, this is well above average. (AU)
(Crust War)

TEENAGE REHAB – "Let's Be Enemies" CD

Strictly meat 'n' potatoes four-chord punk. This Paducah, KY three-piece has been around in one form or another for over a decade; *Let's Be Enemies* is their second full-length album and was recorded and mixed by Joe King of the QUEERS. Yeah, TEENAGE REHAB isn't breaking any new ground—just simple, mostly hard-edged tunes about dead-end living ("Sunday Night Blackout"), heartbreak ("Goodbye Sanity"), losing it ("Voices"), and other things ("Other Things"). 17 songs clocking in at just over 27 minutes, no lyrics included. (CS)
(Jailhouse)

TERMINAL DECLINE – "Earshot!" CD

This is a decent debut release (more of a demo) from this relatively new punk band from South London. Unfortunately some of the quality of the playing and production isn't stellar, but all in all this gets the idea across to the listener. TERMINAL DECLINE has an authentic UK sound that is definitely more retro than modern and reminds me most of the SUBHUMANS! (ML)
(self-released)

TIN HUEY – "Before Obscurity: The Bushflow Tapes" CD

Art rock from the heart of the Midwest circa mid-'70s. I know that's already got a few hearts aflutter (and probably more skipping on to the next review). TIN HUEY was from Akron and shared some of the more far-out music sensibilities that permeated not just the region, but the whole landscape of the more musically adventurous. Comparisons to ZAPPA, BEEFHEART, PERE UBU, and SOFT MACHINE all fit the bill. For a modernish/punk comparison, think MINUTEMEN, or even a sax-soaked SCHLONG. Lots of crazy key and tempo changes. Good stuff, particularly those who can really get down with ZAPPA or more generally with weirdo Midwest skronk rock. These recordings were made between 1978-'79, some live, some in the studio. A few members went on to form the WAITRESSES, but don't hold that against TIN HUEY. (IS)
(Smog Veil)

TOTAL CONTROL – "Retiree/Meds II"

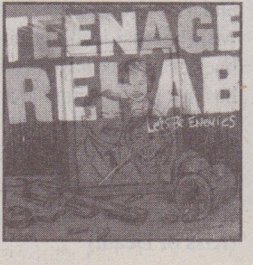
Second single from Australian band TOTAL CONTROL whose members include *MRR* contributor DX from UV RACE and Mikey from EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING. But don't expect to hear either of those bands here. It's definitely a side project. This single doesn't really bring anything new to the table, but that's not always the point. The A-side "Retiree" is punctuated by a GARY NUMAN sound and trucks along with synth-y repetition. The flip "Meds II" has a creepy, heavy, thudding, underwater SUICIDE sound. (AL)
(Iron Lung)

LOS TRACA HOMBRES – LP

Garagey, bluesy (sometimes veering towards bar blues), punky, with some eerie keyboards popping up from time to time. Some songs remind me of the MURDER CITY JUNKIES, while others remind me of the bar-band-going-punk feel of some KBD-era bands. (DD)
(Discos Subterraneos)

USELESS CHILDREN – "Sky Is Falling" LP

Before I came over here, I was sitting around listening to YOKOHAMA HOOKS, then I got here and USELESS CHILDREN sounds pretty similar, until that one dude starts growling (kind of wish he'd shut the fuck up). This is way faster with more of a hardcore vibe than YOKOHAMA HOOKS but the girl vocals are screaming/screechy/



desperate in the same way. My only complaint is that it's a little slick, and I could really do without the boy vocals that keep crashing in. Other than that, this is pretty dark and doomy hardcore with really rad banshee screams. It reminds me here and there of SUBTONIX, which is so fucking good. Kind of epic at points in a metal way rather than a long way. I say yes. (MM)
(EXO)

VICTIMS OF HATE – "Sen O Zivote" CD

VICTIMS OF HATE fall somewhere between anthemic and apocalyptic crust, and as is typically the case, the Czech language suits itself perfectly to the gruff vocal delivery. They're tight as hell, and their version of Scandicrust tinged with liberal doses of metal is powerful and non-stop, if not entirely original. There are tunes that are too metal for my liking ("Pohrdani Nenavisti"), but those are tempered with charging, fist-in-the-air ragers like "Vostnaty Draty" that bring to mind visions of cold mountain villages, black studded jackets, and beer. Lots of beer. 14 songs, including a TORR cover, in just under 36 minutes—a total assault. (WN)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

VOÇO PROTESTA – "Vojo al Libereco" LP

This LP is the second release I've heard from this Esperanto-speaking Japanese band, the other being the split with ACTIVE MINDS. As I just learned, Esperanto is a language developed in the 1800s as a sort of international language, created to ease peace talks and such. Check out the Wiki, it's pretty interesting. The tunes here are not as blown-out as a lot of the other Japanese bands that run in this circle, but it's really noisy, fast, and relentless nonetheless. Damn, the whole thing is really good, but I keep playing the track "Kasas Kontraudirojn" over and over. I can't help but aggressively nod along and shake my fist to this. Smart and raging—what more could one ask for? (JU)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

WHISKEY TRENCH – "Television" LP

Big, gruff, tough, and hooky, it's got that Midwest-meets-Gainesville sound down to a T, coming off equal parts BELTONES, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, DILLINGER 4, and OFF WITH THEIR HEADS. The fist-in-the-air, beer-can-spill moments to the max, backed up with that hogging-the-mic moment in full effect. Every song an anthem without bleeding into the next, every tune a foot-stomper, and every hook and absolute winner. I lost interest in the blokes-with-beards-drinking-cheap-beers scene a while back, but this has taken it to a new level and has set a lofty standard that all these schmoes should be reaching for. A cover of the NILS' "In Between" firmly nails this golden platter to the winner's board. I could very easily fall in love with this record. Top ten of the year. (SD)
(Kiss of Death)

WHITE SHIT – "White Shi'ite" 10"

From the artwork I thought this was gonna be some FEARLESS IRANIANS Muslim-themed punk but, thankfully, it's not. Within the grooves I find something similar to a more bass-heavy 1.6 BAND. Jared's (KARP, THE WHIP, BIG BUSINESS, now a MELVIN) voice is unmistakable here as well—very '90s sounding. The B-side is a competent cover of one of my favorite songs, GISM's "Fire," and to me, it comes off as a piss-take parody, whether they are fans or not. It just rubbed me the wrong way, especially the way they wrote the lyrics on the insert as gibberish, which is probably what they are actually singing. I'm not quite sure how much I like the originals here either; lyrically, it's quite goofy and the music isn't really my thing either, though if you are already a fan of BIG BUSINESS or any of the alums' previous efforts, I'm sure you'd dig it. (JU)
(Wantage)

WIZZARD SLEEVE – "Make The World Go Away" LP

The Mobile, Alabama band WIZZARD SLEEVE, featuring Captain Beyonce of KAJUN SS, conjures up murky swamp grit. Though including most of the songs already featured on their previous 7" and split EPs, WIZZARD SLEEVE's full-length works well as a complete album. It's a Southern synth, meth-head creepy-crawl, it's messy, and it has some "whoa-oh-oh"s thrown in (almost always a selling point). *Make the World Go Away* is a collection of wild, hazy pop nightmares. (AL)
(Hozac)

WOOLLEN KITS – "Teenage Love" EP

Like a punker or maybe just more distorted BEAT HAPPENING. Reminds me of the CHRISTMAS ISLAND cover of "Morning Sunshine" because it's slow, catchy, and sounds familiar. If you're really into BEAT HAPPENING and you're reading this magazine, then I can't help but think you'd be into this because it's pulled off well enough. (P$)
(Periodic Collective)

YOUNG LIONS – "1982-83: From the Vaults" LP+7"

This was a nice surprise! I'd heard a track or two from this early-to-mid-'80s Toronto-area band before, but wasn't familiar with them. The sounds here, taken from various '82-'84 demos, show a very strong early-CLASH/STIFF LITTLE FINGERS influence (down to the obligatory white reggae number!), with some hardcore drive on certain songs. Right off the bat, I was reminded of the old San Francisco band (IMPATIENT) YOUTH, as well as an NYC band that came a little later, URGENT FURY. Really great melodic punk with a charming garagy quality. The LP comes with a cool full-color insert and a bonus two-track 7". This gets my recommendation for sure. Next, let's see the YOUTH YOUTH YOUTH material back in print! (CS)
(Schizophrenic)

THE YULE LOGS – "The Yule Logs" CD

An indie-rock holiday album wherein originals such as "Christmas Is Lonely (When You're a Jew)" and "Christmas from Berlin" rub shoulders with covers ranging from "Merry Christmas (I Don't Want to Fight Tonight)" to "We Three Kings." The latter gets a half-hearted ENNIO MORRICONE (more like BRUNO NICOLAI) treatment, in one of the many stabs at indie-style cleverness (none of which are quite as clever as "We three kings of Orient are trying to smoke a rubber cigar / It was loaded and exploded, now we are kings of Mars"). (DD)
(Self-released)

ZEMEZLUC – "07 and 08" CD

Czech street-punk with rousing Oi choruses. Like a harder, rougher STAGE BOTTLES but Czech. Good shit, but not sure I need to hear it again. (TB)
(self-released)

ZERO MENTALITY – "Black Rock" CD

This is just awful, pure fucking garbage. Imagine a mix of the worst elements of modern hardcore with cheesy rock and nu-metal. Fucking unbearable. (VX)
(Let It Burn)

ZOOPARTY – "Re-fuse" CD

Sweden does it again with another brilliant melodic punk band, ZOOPARTY could be members of SMALLTOWN and RANDY playing together—they're that good. They have a very sharp, catchy, clean sound that makes it very hard to sit still. They also have definite pop sensibilities and with some crazy songwriting and back-up vocals I thought of the REZILLOS and the TOY DOLLS. The RAMONES would be a more obvious influence of course, but this is anything but copycat—they have a very original sound that bursts with energy and hooks. There is also guest playing by none other than Glen Matlock and Brian James! (It's true too; there are pictures!) This is brilliant; if you're like your punk catchy as hell then I can't recommend this enough... So am I the last person to hear of ZOOPARTY?? (AD)
(Acme)

V/A – "Bored Teenagers Volume 5" LP/CD

The all-legit, all-UK *Bored Teenagers* series of old and obscure punk comps have always been a bit spotty in terms of back-to-back killer tunes. Each has a few great songs, but usually not enough to get me to shell out for them'em. That said, the fact that Bin Liner does these on the up-and-up and unearths so much (largely) unheard UK punk from '77-'84 (or so) is impressive. The latest volume includes: BLITZ,

VICARS, RATS, TARTS, PETE NEWNHAM, T.H.E., EGOS, REZIZTERS, and NEGATIVES. The CD version includes far more songs. Both have really great booklets with lots of info and photos of the bands. (IS)
(Bin Liner)

V/A – "Fresh Cuts and Cigarette Burns" EP

Six-band compilation featuring FNU RONNIES, SICK JUMP!, KILL THE HIPPIES, CURTAINS, WHITE LOAD, and Cleveland's answer to the VIVIAN GIRLS, the FLYING TRICHECOS. That's a whole lotta primo pent-up Midwest sexual frustration crammed on to one mean 7". Not a shitty song in the bunch, and each is different enough that it doesn't suffer from being a washout of sound-alike bands. You get thrashy, kinda garagy, post-punky, KILL THE HIPPIES madness and then FLYIN TRICHECOS blown-out mess of shit. It kinda comes off sounding like one of the better early-'80s punk comps (punk, hardcore, whatever, having a big luvfest), without being all bullshit retro about it. Fucking great record. Limited to 300. Act fast. (IS)
(Criminal IQ)

V/A – "Mainstream Music Is Shit" 2xCD/zine

With a title like that, you're really setting yourself up for a fall, right? I mean, what if the stridently independent 100% DIY/non-commercial music is also shit!? Then what!?! The subtitle is "37 Tracks of UK Punk and Ska," which is accurate, but hardly descriptive. Fortunately, for all concerned, the offerings, by and large, are really excellent. Can't say these aged ears had ever heard of *any* of these bands before (well, it has been sixteen years since I resided in ol' Blighty), but fuck me, there are several great songs contained herein—even, much to my astonishment, some of the ska tracks!—and there is virtually no filler, a concept rare in compilations. Bloody hell, mebbe underground music is really fantastic after all. Standouts for me include RISING STRIKE (an unreleased track—sign 'em up, some DIY outfit, quick), the DEAD RECKONING, and the sublime horns and melodious skanking on HARIJAN, but really, this is fairly exceptional, and a credit to all involved, not to mention the UK punk scene. Who would've thought... (RK)
(TNS)

V/A – "Messthetics #107: London, Volume 3" CD

The genius third installment of the *Messthetics* DIY London series from the Hyped 2 Death catalog digs up more great obscure post-punk bands that sometimes never even cut their teeth playing shows. As we've come to expect, the compilation comes accompanied by a detailed booklet that includes stories and interviews that reinforce the loving care and time that went into these comps. They're not just thrown together, but researched and carefully curated pieces of history. Like with the rest of the series, #107 is obviously essential for those of use who could never hope to find the records for ourselves, but it's also pieced together in such a way that the compilation comes out greater than its parts. (AL)
(Hyped 2 Death)

V/A – "Nacido Para Estorbar" LP

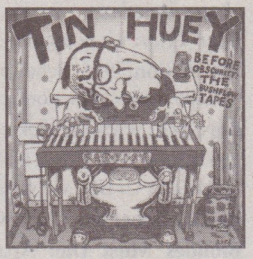
Fucking Spanish hardcore! If ever there were a place primed for the emergence of hardcore punk, it was Spain in the post-Franco years. Angry and disaffected, wracked by drugs, poverty, and a simmering internal conflict, the Spain birthed punk and hardcore bands that were as desperate as any on Earth. This LP collects three demos and two 7"s from bands active in the early '80s. FRENOPATICSS have a vicious proto-HC sound with sung/shouted vocals and a fair bit of melody (some members went on to the legendary SUBTERRANEAN KIDS). ATTAK (obviously not the UK band of the same name) has a primitive fast hardcore sound that evokes both DRI and MOB 47. These tracks have never been released before, and they're amazing! KANGRENA has a kind of DISCHAGE-meets-MDC sound, marrying hard tracks with charismatic, tuneful vocals. SENTIDO COMUN was a strange bird, with their unhinged female vocals and creepy later-DEAD KENNEDYS/KILLING JOKE sound. CODIGO NEUROTICO is by far the best-produced band on the comp, and the least interesting. Very CLASH/RAMONES, for better or worse. Apparently this LP was originally supposed to be released in 1989 and is only now seeing the light of day. This is as good as a compilation gets and there's something here to please just about any punk fan. Totally fucking recommended, and along with the recent re-release of the R.I.P./ESKORBUTO LP maybe the most crucial release of old Spanish punk I've heard. (AU)
(BCore)

V/A – "Six Ways to Fuck Shit Up" EP

A Dutch and a British label hooked up to release these six tracks, and I think the bands are all from these countries as well. The Chaos Alliance side is the winner here, with a great UK anarcho-style number from BURNT CROSS; a sick, fast hardcore song from DE RECLASSERING, not too different from their countrymates MAKILADORAS; and a decent raw-ish punk song from DEAD SUBVERTS, with traded-off vocals and hate of the police state. The other side falls short of average, and with all the great records in this world, I can't see anyone having time for these. Three ways to fuck shit up is still all right. (JM)
(Pumpkin / Chaos Alliance)

V/A – "You Weren't There: A History of Chicago Punk 1977-1984" LP+DVD

This is essentially a "limited edition" version of the *You Weren't There* DVD that includes a 19-track LP. I'm not going to review the film itself here (check the Movies section in a future issue) other than to say it's one of the best of the recent slew of documentaries to cover some segment of the late-'70s/early-'80s American punk scene. Check it out. The LP is pretty cool, featuring almost exclusively unreleased and/or hard-to-find early Chicago recordings. Many, like MENTALLY ILL, STRIKE UNDER, A.O.F., NAKED RAYGUN, RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED, SAVAGE BELIEFS, etc. appeared in the movie, but at least a quarter of the bands here were ostensibly too obscure: BUZZARDS, PAINTERBAND, TOOTHPASTE, NADSAT REBEL, and more. Overall, it's a solid collection with some nice surprises, though I guess more of a collector's item than something you're gonna play on a regular basis. Or maybe you *love* the band VERBOTEN (vocals by Dave Grohl's 15-year-old cousin) and have been waiting for their classic track "Slump Shot" to be released on vinyl for the last 27 years? (CS)
(Regressive Films/Factory 25)



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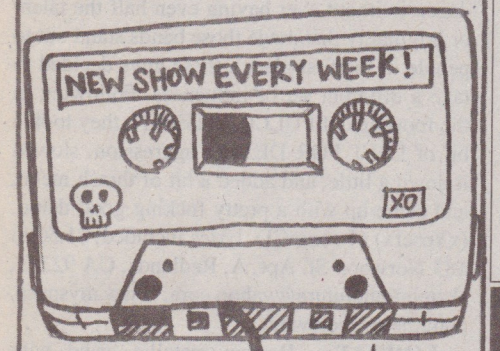

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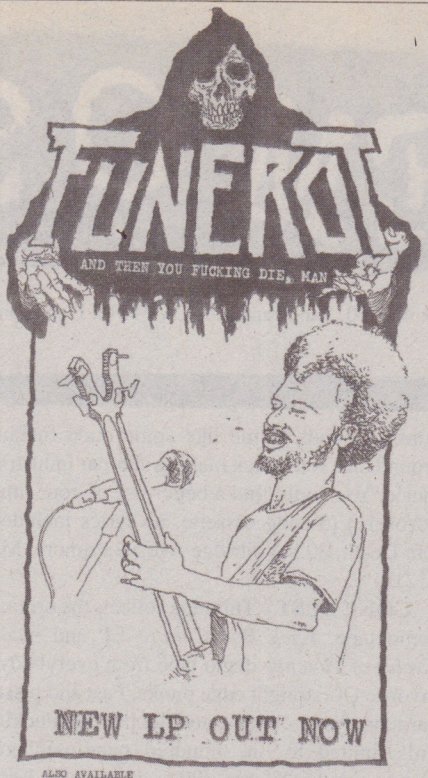

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Justin Briggs, Dan Goetz, xYosefx

BASEMENT BOYS – I don't listen to a ton of Oi!, but this self-described "Basement Oi" is actually pretty rad and catchy. These tower skins know how to write some anthemic shit with huge hooky riffs that are a little more hardcore leaning, and the recording captures everything perfectly. This contains three originals and a SAM COOKE cover, on which the singer gets downright soulful. (Dan) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Alex Keller, 9521 Madison Ave, Cleveland, OH 44102, www.myspace.com/basementboysclevo, alexwkeller@yahoo.com)

BLOODCLOT FAGGOTS – I would've liked this demo more had I received it as an unlabeled tape without having to know the band's contrived "offensive" name, read their mysterious-angry-guy-as-Dr. Seuss haikus that pass as lyrics, or see shirtless duder in a ski mask in the band photo (the same styled mask as on that CULT RITUAL 7". Coincidence?). The music is trebly, tight/sloppy hardcore somewhere between SEX VID and the FORMALDEHYDE JUNKIES with mosh breakdowns and the requisite reverbed out vocals. Their schtick and the fact that is seems like they're bandwagon jumpers is irritating, but the music passes the test. (Dan) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, www.nopatience.org)

BRAIN IDEA – Hmmm, a cover photo of three men with ironic facial hair is usually a sure sign of hipster bullshit. These gents play a mix of garage (in the psych/pop vein) with some punk/post-punk influences (the angularity of WIRE, the disjointed timing of MINUTEMEN). Competent, but not a real standout. Also, their mustaches are awful. Is that still a thing? I guess it's still a thing. They look like '70s "cool" dads, or child molesters. (xYosefx) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included, 2155 N. Spaulding, Chicago, IL 60647)

BROKEN NECK – Here's a mid-paced female-fronted hardcore band from Pittsburgh with a sound solidly rooted in the 1980s. I think that JUDGE, NEGATIVE APPROACH, and *Victim in Pain* are frequently found on the band's collective record players. Also, one song had a riff that reminded me of BORN AGAINST, so that can't be bad. Good stuff, the six songs here are over too soon. I'd like to check out the lyrics; too bad they weren't included. (xYosefx) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, Fan Death, 303 Whitridge Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218)

THE CHICKENS – I guess this is "synth punk". Sounds to me like some dude fucking around on a four-track making sub-par industrial music. You could find a better use of your time. (xYosefx) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included, Fan Death, 303 Whitridge Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218)

COKE BUST – This tape collects the original demo tape, *Fuck Bar Culture* EP and recent *Cycles of Violence* demo tape from everybody's favorite DC straight edge punks. Fast and pissed hardcore for circle pits, not kickboxing. Fucking go! Limited to one hundred hand-numbered copies, woo! (xYosefx) (20-song cassette, lyrics included, Blinded c/o Hubert Denis, PO Box 51, 07-200 Wysikow, POLAND, blindedrec@o2.pl)

CONDENADA – I'd never heard these Chicago punks before, but this tape collects an EP on Lengua Armada, a split with SIN ORDEN, and eight tracks recorded live on the radio in Portland. The music is bass heavy and driving with a fair amount of melody (not "melodic"), with lyrics in both English and Spanish. Female vocals, too—female everything, actually, since it's an all-woman band. Not really up my alley, but definitely good. Limited to one-hundred hand-numbered copies. (xYosefx) (16-song cassette, lyrics included c/o Blinded c/o Hubert Denis, PO Box 51, 07-200 Wysikow, POLAND, blindrec@o2.pl)

CORROSIVE KIDS / EXOTIC ANDROIDS – CORROSIVE KIDS' side is seriously all over the place and fucking bizarre in the same spirit (perhaps even more so) as the weirder Alternative Tentacles bands. Echo fadeouts, sax solos, '60s sitar-inspired jams, it's all here, though most of the songs are mid-tempo or slower. The vocals are heavily exaggerated and almost sound like cartoony caricatures of classic punk vocalists, with sort of an overall NOMEANSNO feeling. I imagine few will be able to hang, but this is rad. EXOTIC ANDROIDS is a fitting counterpart, dishing out some mellow proto-grunge riffing and palm muting with reverb-y female vocals. I like it, though their songs could be a bit more distinguished from each other.
(14-song cassette, no lyrics included, radicalfloral@yahoo.com)

HOOKER SPIT WINDEX – Decent grindcore from a band with a really stupid name. Some of the lyrics are political and fairly intelligent while others are just strings of in-jokes. This is no *From Enslavement to Obliteration* or *Hatred Surge*, but it shows promise. (xYosefx) (13-song cassette, lyrics included, Andy, 191 Medford Ave., Dayton, OH 45410, www.myspace.com/hookerspitwindex, hookerspitwindex@yahoo.com)

THE LOVE BELOW – Good shit here from the modern hardcore camp—a rarity, I know. While most of the kids are churning out wannabe CEREMONY or FUCKED UP clones by the dozen (without ever having even half the talent or originality that made those bands stand out to people in the first place), these guys decided to take a different set of influences. Following in the footsteps of PULLING TEETH, they took a bit of LEFT FOR DEAD's aggression, slowed it down a little, and added a bit of thrash metal, and came up with a pretty fucking good demo. (xYosefx) (4-song CD, lyrics included, $1.50 to 183 Norwood St. Apt. A, Redlands, CA 92373, skateintothefuture@yahoo.com, www.myspace.com/thelovebelowhc)

LOWFAT – Boomy metallic grind with an early NAPALM DEATH feel, with short parts that seem to make up longer songs, and a recording that is uneven and goes in and out. This band has potential, even if things literally sound like a blur. (Dan) (14-song CD, no lyrics included, sanofabitch@hotmail.com)

MLU / SLAVE SCENE – The sides are unlabeled so I'm not positive who is who, but what I'm guessing is the SLAVE SCENE is excellent and what you'd expect from a CULT RITUAL side project. The songs move at a faster pace and are not quite as venomous as their first demo, but are still great. And this is recorded live to boot. The other side of the tape is more straight up experimental, amelodic, and noise-influenced in a free jazz sort of way—something I like more in theory than in practice. (Dan)
(?-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o Josh Erickson, 1632 E Ridgewood St., Orlando, FL 32803)

MURDERESS – Fenriz (of DARKTHRONE and ISENGARD fame) recently blogged about these Portland crusties as his "band of the week" on the Rupert Murdoch-owned social networking site you love to hate and hate to love. He compares them to a mix of HIS HERO IS GONE and Sweden's PUKE, and who the fuck am I to argue with the man who brought us *A Blaze in the Northern Sky*? This is good epic crust, kind of what you'd probably expect from PDX at this point. The mix isn't

the best, and there are no lyrics, but this is definitely a promising demo. (xYosefx) (4-song CDR, no lyrics included, Tomorrow Belongs to Us, PO Box 11563, Portland, OR 97211, punkisaghetto@gmail.com, www.myspace.com/tomorrowrecordsanddistro)

NEUTRON RATS – This is awesome. Stripped down raw punk rock with solid hooks and a drummer who sounds like he's really pushing himself to keep up, in a good way. The vocalist sounds like his throat is going to give out at any time, there's a genuinely raw edge to his voice that can't be faked. Four originals and a fucking EXPLOITED cover on this tape, so buy it already. Maybe they'll write out some lyrics if you ask because this one didn't come with any, which is a shame. (xYosefx) (5-song cassette, no lyrics included, $4 to Brendan, 20 South Manning, Albany, NY 12203)

ORGANIZED SPORTS – Manic, inventive hardcore with a blunt sort of "meat and potatoes" recording and vocals, but with more "weird" songwriting and guitar parts. The artwork has the irritating 2009 post-modern "cryptic" ambiguously sketchy thing going on (swastika inside a Star of David, inside the female symbol, for one), but the music makes it forgivable enough. (Dan) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, no address)

OTAKU PARTY – Powerviolence en Francais! This tape comes bearing the anti-music symbol (see IN DISGUST and MAGRUDERGRIND), so that gives me some high hopes and a good idea what to expect within. It also lists sixteen tracks with the note "Total playing time: 18 minutes // Play at maximum volume," so I'm hoping for some chaotic fast shit, which is pretty much what I get. The guitar is a bit drowned in the mix at times, but this is some fucked up hardcore a la RUPTURE and LARM. What I'm saying is that it's good. Not the best I've heard, but these guys are definitely worth keeping an eye on. (xYosefx) (16-song cassette, lyrics included, Ivan Brun, 57 Rue du 2er Mars 1993, 69100 Villeurbanne, FRANCE, www.myspace.com/otakuparty)

RÁKOSI – This Hungarian band is great! Their sound borrows from both '80s US and international hardcore sounds. Fuck, I love it. The short tunes are bouncy yet powerful and aggressive at the same time and I can't help but play them over and over. Love it, love it, love it. So should you! (Justin) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, Combat Action Tapes, 122 Argyle Street, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M5V 2K8, case_in_point@hotmail.com)

SAIRAUS – Just two songs here, I guess they're being smart and saving the rest for a record rather than blowing their load on the demo. This features members and ex-members of CTHUWULF, PROGERIA, KONTRAATTAQUE, and HATED PRINCIPLES playing hardcore punk with gruff vocals and political lyrics. This falls somewhere between '80s skinhead hardcore and '90s Profane Existence anarcho punk, which is a pretty rad mix if you ask me. (xYosefx) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, Don Seki, 2680 Butler Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90064, sairaus@ymail.com)

SOCIALCIDE – Fuck yes! Here's a discography tape collecting all of the releases (I believe) of these late, lamented Virginia thrashers. This features their LP, EP, demo, two comp tracks, and an unreleased song (which is worth the price of the tape alone). For those who might not know them, SOCIALCIDE played fast hardcore and had the serious songwriting chops that you don't see often enough in hardcore today. They also had members of WASTED TIME and TIME TO ESCAPE, if you are about that. Limited to one-hundred hand-numbered copies. (xYosefx) (30-song cassette, lyrics included, Blinded c/o Hubert Denis, PO Box 51, 07-200 Wysikow, POLAND, blindedrec@o2.pl)

STORM OF STRESS – This is a one-man band playing crust/grind/metal/punk (the style varies quite a bit throughout) with lyrics about racism and hating hipsters. The first track non-ironically advises a friend to "man up," and most of the lyrics are equally ill thought out. There are also dozens of major spelling errors in the lyrics including one in a song title, which drives me fucking crazy. There are some good riffs here but it never really comes together as a whole. (xYosefx) (7-song CD, lyrics included, Andy, 191 Medford Ave., Dayton, OH 45410, www.myspace.com/stormofstress, stormofstress@yahoo.com)

STRAIGHTJACKET NATION – This collects SJN's *Cheap Kicks* LP and *6 Song EP* together on one tape. These Aussie fucks are among the best hardcore bands around today, and I'm still kicking myself for missing them when they came through California. Unless you want to feel like an idiot as well, you should buy as many of their records as you can, and soon. This tape is a good start if you still have a tape player in your car (if you have a car, which I don't). Jam this shit while driving 95 down residential roads. (xYosefx) (19-song cassette, lyrics included, Blinded c/o Hubert Denis, PO Box 51, 07-200 Wysikow, POLAND, blindedrec@o2.pl)

VIVID SEKT – When I picked this up from the demo crate, I was expecting hardcore in the vein of SEX VID or CULT RITUAL judging from the cover, band name, and layout. This is not that. VIVID SEKT plays a very earnest and dated form or early-'80s UK anarcho punk. Rather than taking from the militant aesthetics of CRASS and CONFLICT, these Portland punks adopted the psych-influenced guitars of ZOUNDS and THE MOB with the melody of OMEGA TRIBE and FLOWERS IN THE DUSTBIN, complete with a faux British accent for the vocalist. VIVID SEKT is obviously seeking to meticulously recreate a lost sound from a previous era, which is a project I feel ambivalent about at best. Why is it that punks refuse to let the past stay dead—why must we always dredge our own cultural history for scraps to piece together whatever it is that we feel we must do? It seems like we're always stuck in the past, whether it's DC in 1980 or London in '77 or Japan in '82. If that refusal to move forward always sounded as genuine (and as good) as this tape does, I'd be more inclined to let it slide most of the time. VIVID SEKT is succeeding where so many try but fail: creating excellent original music within a limited stylistic template from a bygone era. (xYosefx) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, 4240 SW 7th Ave., Portland, OR 97239, vivid_sekt@hotmail.com)

V/A – SCVM – This is a fifteen-band "hardcore/grindcore/noisecore" comp from Australia, and the second tape I've reviewed this month to use the "anti-music" sigil. I sense a trend. Up first is PATHETIC HUMAN, playing brutal fast hardcore, really good shit. SEPTIC SURGE provides twenty seconds of noise followed by ten seconds of grind a la MAN IS THE BASTARD. SCUMMY GUMS contributes one very lo-fi track of intense grindcore. THE KILL you should already know, one of the best grind bands to ever come from Australia. RADIATION NATION comes next with a shittily recorded crusty grind track. Then it's HOLY BONER with some fucked-up chaotic noisecore. COLLAPSED TOILET VIETNAM (I couldn't make this up if I tried) plays a "song" of noise-drenched experimental grind. Awesome. PISSBOLT starts off the second side with some muddy-sounding sludgy thrash. SUFFER (not be confused with the defunct UK crust band) was described quite well in last month's "All Foreign Junk" column, look it up. Suffice to say their song on this comp is excellent, get into it. One of the best new hardcore bands I've heard in a while. NUCLEAR SEX ADDICT is total CONFUSE/GAI worship—I can only take so much noise in my core, I like this but listening to too much gives me a raging headache. NECKHOLD is a harsh noise project, all static and feedback and screaming. EXTORTION (half of you probably just started reading here after noticing their name while glancing over the demo reviews) gives us a new recording of "Liar," the first track off of their self-titled EP. This version sounds really fucking good, but it's EXTORTION, so you should have already known that. SUPER FUN HAPPY SLIDE plays pretty decent grind/hardcore with cookie monster vocals, EXTORTION's a tough act to follow though. EBOLA DISCO provides a few seconds of noise, it just sounds like instruments being tuned and then it's over. OCCULT BLOOD is more MITB-worship, not bad at all. Overall this is a fucking killer comp. These are hand-numbered out of 200, so you'd better snatch one up quick. (xYosefx) (15-song cassette, no lyrics included, mindtimedestroy.blogspot.com, rdmpunx@hotmail.com)

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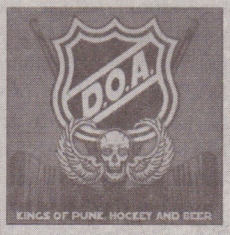

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(DA) Diane Anastasio **(JB) Julia Booze** **(BG) Bob Goldie** **(MM) Marissa Magic** **(CI) Cissie Scurlock**
(JD) Judy Balmin **(LG) Layla Gibbon** **(CH) Cassie Harwood** **(JM) Jeff Mason** **(DS) Dionne Stevens**
(DG) Dan Goetz **(MJ) Meredith Jones** **(CR) Casey Ress** **(VX) XYosefX**

ACHTUNG! #1 / ?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Absolutely bare bones and minimal, yet at the same time, this debut zine is friggin' faultless in attitude and content worth reading! Put out by one of the dudes in Life Trap (a band you should be familiar with, and your record collection should include their EP), this issue interviews punk rock deity TV Smith, and the guy that runs the killer '70s punk reissue label Sing Sing Records (who recently put out the De Cylinders 45's). The rest of the issue is a Life Trap tour diary that basically talks about getting wasted with Total Abuse across the US West. Sounds like a fucking great time. The last page leaves us with a warning that the next issue will come when this guy gets out of jail. Somehow, I bet he's not even kidding. Great zine. (BG)
Achtung! c/o Crenshaw / 153 Windover Rd. Apt. #2 / Memphis, TN 38111 / clshaw@memphis.edu

ALTA INTENSIDAZ #5 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
I've wanted to learn Spanish for a while now and every time I come across a new issue of Teodoro's zine *Alta Intesidaz* I try to read as much as I can with my very limited knowledge of the language. The cover has a drawing of a bomb scene with the focal point being an airborne, crazed punk chicken holding half of a broken guitar and it's a great way to start the issue. The first couple pgs contain an editorial with some writing about Kronstadt, Destino Final, and Teo's band Firmeza 10, and then there is a long, hand-written interview with Barcelona's Suko De Nabo. The last several pgs contain in-depth record reviews of mostly Spanish and Japanese bands, but also some South American and Texan bands. The music coverage is some of my favorite current bands and I have no doubt that if I knew Spanish, *Alta Intensidaz* would be one of my favorite zines. At any rate, I'll keep a stash of each issue in hopes that I'll someday be semi-fluent enough to read them. (CI)
Teodoro Hernandez / Apdo 33.343 / 08080 Barcelona / Spain

ARTCORE #26 /. $?
I enjoyed this. Lots of interviews, pictures and reviews. There were histories of Angry Samoans and the Cramps that I found informative. Comes with a CD of House of Commons. Good times. (MM)
c/o 1 Aberdulais rd. / Gabalfa / Cardiff / CF14 2PH / UK

BACK TO BASICS #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
These kids are all about keeping punk zines going. This first issue shows they have a way to go before this enthusiasm will take hold with those uninterested. The interview with the Only Threat came off pretty well. The columns are lackluster—intro-style pieces about soundproofing and promoting, plus a travel narrative and an ode to smoking. Some blurry photos of the police appear, taken at the recent anti-G20 protests in Pittsburgh. There is zombie-themed fiction, piggybacking on the work of Max Brooks. As with most first issues, *Back To Basics* has a lot of room for improvement . (JM)
PO Box 332 / Bradfordwoods, PA 15015 / backtobasicspgh@gmail.com

BITTER PIE #20 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 16 pgs
For years I've seen the stickers associated with this comic—the ones that read "Not Your Bitch", without ever having read the actual zine. Now, eleven years after the first issue I finally git the chance to check this out and the wait was worth it. This issue of the comic / zine recounts the story of an Anal Cunt show in 1988 that ended in violence and police harassment told through the eyes of the main character, Charlott. The story serves as a vehicle to express the difficulties in surviving life and the realization that most people truly are assholes so in the end, why give a rat's ass what they may think of you? Good story, good illustrations, simple and honest. (CR)
2419 Mission St / San Francisco, CA 94110
bitterpie@hotmail.com

COUNTERFEIT GARBAGE #2 / $2 ppd US, $4 ppd international
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
When a zine comes from Ohio and features an Inmates interview inside and a photo of a guy in an In Disgust pullover standing in front of a massage parlor on the back cover, I have pretty high expectations. This zine meets or exceeds all of them. The writing is acerbic and witty, the bands (Inmates, Vile Gash and Obliteration) give meaningful responses to well-thought out questions and the layout is perfect. Judging from the looks of this issue, *Counterfeit Garbage* is definitely in the running for being the best hardcore zine in the US today. The rest of you better step up your fucking game. (VX)
Tall Rob / 1131 N. High St Apt. #301 / Columbus, OH 43201
Counterfeit.garbage@gmail.com

DISTORT #23 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 14 pgs
The premise of *Distort* is similar to that of *Rock and the Pop Narcotic*: that raw, antisocial hardcore punk with merit is often ignored or dismissed in favor of more musically or politically palatable varieties of the genre, often from areas with name recognition, and DX's aim in doing this zine is to understand and intelligently articulate the innerworkings of the former,

and to top it all off, he is an exceptional writer. This issue consists of interviews with Watery Love (ex-Clockcleaner), Waste Management, and Wasted Time that, as with all of DX's interviews, really seek to understand where the bands are coming from and why they do what they do. There's also a Straightjacket Nation South East Asian tour diary that emphasizes the lack of a frame of reference he had going into it (as the public has not been familiarized with the South East Asian experience via pop culture the way it has with, say, Compton or the Arizona desert), a short piece on the differences between the mindsets of nerds and punks that uses Steve Albini's experience as an example of the transition from the former to the latter, and reviews of a few one-sided 12"s. His writing style gets a little more lucid and irreverent at times in this issue, especially in the interview with Watery Love (ex-Clockcleaner), and there are more photos of homemade (non-screenprinted) band shirts and impeccable layouts with which regular readers should be familiar. (DG)

PO Box 239 / North Carlton / Victoria, 3054 / Australia
distorttheworld@gmail.com

EARTH FIRST Samhain/Yule 2009 / $4.50 US & Cdn
11 x 17 – printed – 32 pgs
This issue in particular has a global focus. Profit-driven forces are shown to be at working for destruction in Sonora, Mexico; Black Mesa, Arizona; Borneo, Malaysia; Alberta, Canada; and Richmond, here in the Bay Area. Two large protests are covered–an attempt to shut down a coal-powered plant in Copenhagen and the anti-G20 actions in Pittsburgh. Yes, color photography is provided. There are many more shorter news blurbs as well. Two pieces on security culture ask what can and should be done with former activists who now provide information to the state. Sadly, the only safe relationship is none at all. Also investigated is an old standard, tree spiking. I found this installment to be heavy on news and analysis with not as much self-congratulating or ridiculous shit. This is a huge paper with plenty to read. They're selling a bundle of complete back issues, thirty years worth, for $500. (JM)
Daily Planet Publishing / Earth First / POB 3023 / Tucson, AZ 85702

EQUALIZING DISTORT Volume 09, Issue 04 / $?
11.25x8.25 – copied – 24 pgs
This long running zine accompanies a hardcore radio show on CUIT in Canada, and features transcriptions of interviews from that show, plus a few reviews. It's a pretty cool booklet, representing the hardcore community and local underground radio in a most excellent way. This issue features interviews with the School Jerks and Disco Assault, as well as a more extensive discussion with the guy behind the hardcore blog Stuck in the City, who also puts on shows. I think because these interviews are from a radio show they read more like conversations than stilted exchanges. I always like flicking through this little booklet and this edition proved to be no exception. (LG)
Equalizingdistort.blogspot.com

FAILSAFE August 2009 / $?
11.25 x 8.25 – printed – 24 pgs
This zine, which has been around for at least fifteen years (I can't make out the exact issue number on this one), is published on such high quality paper that I almost feel like calling it a magazine! But the whole production is totally DIY and not one ad is found within the pgs, so "zine" it shall remain! Living in San Francisco, I think the most interesting interview in these pgs is with Jennifer Blowdryer (who also gets the cover shot for this issue), of the fairly obscure late '70s punk band the Blowdryers. But then there's an excellent interview with the god-like TV Smith of the Adverts, which also features some great photos scattered about. Not bad for one issue, eh? Not enough? How about a couple of shorter interviews with Steve McDonald of Redd Kross, punk photographer James Stark, or Joseph Porta, who currently plays with longtime band Blyth Power, but also used to hit the sticks for the Mob and Zounds? That's a pretty damn impressive lineup for one issue, if you ask me. The rest of the pgs contain a few record and show reviews, the highlight of which is a live gig review/short history of Connecticut hardcore bands CIA and 76% Uncertain. If I had to mention any downside of this publication it would be that it lacks opinion or anything outside of music, but some folks would argue that that's what music zines should be! I'm also not sure what the price on this sucker is, but the thick paper makes me believe it's got to be pretty expensive. Either way, this is zine worth reading. (BG)
Failsafe / 63 Milton Street / Derby DE22 3PA / ENGLAND / failsafezine@yahoo.com

GADGIE #24 / #1.50 ppd or 5$ US ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 32 pgs
Out of Boston, in the UK that is, you got a combination of a perzine that talks of family holidays and the casualties of playing football, snore, with the information you would expect from a standard scene report, plus some historical reference thrown in for perspective/posterity and even some reviews of punk related materials that he has in his possession. The content is plentiful due to the *Slug & Lettuce* sized font, but unfortunately much of the first column on several pgs is cut off due to what I assume is a copying snafu... not an ideal reviewer copy. That is all I have to say. (DS)
Marv / PO Box 93 / Boston / Lincolnshire / England PE 7YB
mrgadgie@hotmail.com

GIVE ME A DOLLAR / $3
5.5x8.5 – copied – 60 pgs
This has a red cardstock cover smeared with gold paint, with a print of a gurning man with glasses and a beard. I opened it to several pages of hobo poetry, and my heart sunk... But I quickly flipped to an interesting piece about wintering on an illegally moored but very fetching houseboat on the Mississippi. Most of the other writing in this zine erred on the side of self-indulgent, with one particularly depressing to read piece on white punk boys gentrifying West Oakland that seemed particularly oblivious... Rob Noxious' focus seems to fall on how to get by using your own resources, attempting to live as freely as possibly within the constraints of capitalism. What are you gonna do when the rent id due? I found his most of his writing whiny and boring. I like per-zines generally, but whilst reading this I kept thinking, "Get your shit together boy! You chose this way of living, learn how to make it work!!" Reading someone's whine report is not super pleasurable unless they are a great writer... (LG)
Rob / 1771 11th St / Oakland, CA 94607
robotearl@gmail.com

GOT MYSELF #3.5 / $2 US, $3 world, or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 22 pgs
This half-issue is almost entirely dedicated to the punk history of Charlottesville, VA. Most of the info comes from recent interviews with dudes who did bands then—Michael from the Beef People, John from the Landlords, and Larry from C'ville's first hardcore band, Lackey Die. A good amount of fliers & photos are included, along with some reprints from old zines, including *MRR*. Asking old people what happened back then can lead to some good anecdotes, but I think a more accurate picture would be gained by reading the zines of the era. But since that material is rarely readily accessible, this'll have to do. Today's youth appear via an interview with Total Wreck. Unfortunately, all the kids who said they'd help on their tour are "big faggots" and didn't, though how this is related to their unreliability isn't mentioned. The aesthetic is totally cut & paste, I think they even used a typewriter. (JM)
Sam Richardson / Johnson Hall, Room 923 / 801 W. Franklin St. / Richmond, VA 23220

THE GREAT MYSPACE SWINDLE / $2ppd US, $3ppd international
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 27 pge
This zine documents the author creating a fictitious female MySpace profile and recording what happens. He (literally) graphs the demographics of the people who then view the profile and add "Amber" as a friend, and I'm sure I don't have to go into who exactly most of these people are, though it's interesting to see how a fake profile can amass almost 194 MySpace friends and 132 unsolicited messages from (I'm guessing) illiterate males who want something out of the deal, NSA or otherwise. It gets better when "Amber" starts e-flirting with one of them, and they ultimately set up a "meeting" in a public place, which involves MySpace duder wandering around for a bit while the author snaps some pictures of his subject. While the zine

makes me giggle, cringe, and wish for more people to pull this sort of thing, I also realize that also he's offering up more serious points about the implications of online and instantaneous communication becoming more prevalent all the time, as well as pointing out the harassing messages from stupid dudes that female MySpace users are much more likely to get on a regular basis. Order this immediately. (DG)
660 4th St. #420 / San Francisco, CA 94107
myspace_swindle@yahoo.com

INCIDENTAL AFTERTHOUGHT #7 & #9 - $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied -20 pgs, 52 pgs respectively
Rad, energetic and snotty hardcore/metal zine from the Phillipines. The later issue is more traditional with coverage of local metal bands Eyes of Fire, Santelmo, Kaktus Karuka, and an interview with Ryan from Unearthly Trance, CT from Rwake, Guerra Mundial, as well as some ramblings, fiction, and the repetition of the phrase "rip you a new one" and "brain frying". I think the obvious dedication and obsession with punk music and culture is what makes this zine fun and interesting, I can tell they love doing it. The earlier issue is an actual *fan*zine, devoted to the greatness of Black Flag. It's pretty much just a long love letter, not a lot of historical fact or trivia per se, but appreciated nonetheless. I mean, I have a blown up Xerox poster of Kira above my bed, so it's preachin' to the choir. Just sayin'. (JB)
885 Cristobal St., Paco / Manila 1007 / PHILLIPINES

IRH #4 /$?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 56 pgs
This is the fourth installment of I Remember Halloween fanzine based out of the Philippines and it focuses on current hardcore bands from all over the place. It's got a pretty extensive zine review section and interviews with REQUIEM from North Carolina, as well as an interview with Cory from Milwaukee's PROTESTANT, Malaysian hardcore band, KAH ROE SHI, and OMERTA from the Philippines. It's pretty comprehensive for its size and might be worth checking out if you dig this kind of music. (DA)
(Dane Cortes / PO Box 1504 / Quezon City CPO / 1155 QC / Philippines / irememberhalloween @gmail.com)

JUST SAY YO! #2 / 3.5 Euros ppd in Europe, $5 ppd in US
8.5 x 12 – printed – 56 pgs
If the name didn't already clue you in, this is a Euro hardcore zine that seems to lean towards the straight edge and modern hardcore side of things. It's definitely well put together and looks good, nice cut and paste style. It's mostly focused on band interviews, featuring Comadre, Get the Most, Death is Not Glamorous, Antillectual, Sink or Swim, Nine Eleven and Frank Turner. The editor also features a few pgs each of record and zine reviews. Not bad, although not really up my alley. (VX)
Nabil Ortega / 908 Route de la Colle / 06570 Saint-Paul / France
papernab@gmail.com

MARGIN MOUTH #7 / Free with stamps
5.5 x 4.25 – printed – 14 pgs
This little buddy is a lightweight, collage style, reviews only zine. The layout is pretty attractive. There's a sick drawing of a dragon somewhere in the middle. What stands out about these reviews is that usually these types of review heavy zines are totally cynical and mean. Some a-hole starts a zine so they can talk a bunch of trash and try to sound like they know something. *Margin Mouth* is kind of a refreshing departure from that trend. This person seems to only be reviewing records they like. *Weird*. I like it. Some of the bands covered are Future Virgins, Sneaky Pinks, Screaming Females, RVIVR, and more. And it's free. No problem. (JD)
Margin Mouth / 5676 York / Los Angeles, CA 90042
Margin-mouth.blogspot.com

PASAZER #26 / 18 Zloty (about $6.50 US)
11.75 x 8.25 – printed – 160 pgs – Polish
It seems like every European country (and Japan) has at least one of these super slick, glossy punk magazines that comes with a CD and contains dozens of one or two page interviews with bands spanning the entire punk rock spectrum. And as much as I could care less about some of the bands featured in such an offering, there's always a bunch that make me wish I was fluent in the language of the publication. And this time that language is Polish, and I can barely make out a word! Fuck! Because this issue, aside from a record review section that is bigger than some entire zines I've reviewed this month, has very cool looking articles on Stiff Little Fingers, the Saints, and Minor Threat (with great photos accompanying them). And amongst the plethora of featured interviews are the Youth Brigade (LA), TV Smith (who seems to be in every zine this month!), the Stupids, and the Cuffs. What am I supposed to do now? Just settle for the pictures, I guess. But all Polish speaking punks should definitely check this out! Oh, and I almost forgot the 24 track CD, which is relatively much better than the ones that generally accompany these glossies, and features pretty much every band interviewed in the pgs. (BG)

Pasazer / PO Box 42 / 39-201 Debica 3 / POLAND / www.pasazer.pl / pasazer@pasazer.pl

PLASTIC BOMB #68 /'$?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 78 pgs – German
Here we go again. This time around, there are interviews with SiK [sic], the Stupids, Sniffing Glue, Crucial Response Records, and a few others. If I spoke German, what would be of interest to me would be the trans history piece, which includes commentary from Kate Bornstein (whose book *Hello Cruel World* I recommend) and Leslie Feinberg, and perhaps the Back To Future Fest coverage. (DG)
Postfach 100205 / D-47002 / Duisburg / Germany
plastic-bomb.de

PUBLICK OCCURANCES #12 / $?
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 29 pgs
What can I say? This is nothing less than sick. Sick like rad. It's an art zine that for this issue exclusively features portraits of '80s metal dudes. I almost shit myself when a sticker with a drawing of King Diamond fell out of the envelope. I'm having a painful struggle trying to decide whether they go on my skateboard or my guitar or perhaps my laptop... It's rough. The cover I believe is screen printed on some kind of strange torn edged fancy fuzzy cardstock. It's so fancy and arty that the ink comes off on your fingers a little bit. There's also a cardstock centerfold stapled in the middle of the zine. It's also pretty sick. I think it's scary how the fan dudes depicted towards the last pgs are drawn without noses. Joan Jett and Lita Ford seem to be the only ladies in the line up. Not that I'm counting. This zine kind of reminds me of the book that was published recently at McSweeneys, *All Known Metal Bands*. It's a list of just that. It makes you think the same kinds of thing—*I don't understand what the function of this is, yet I can't help but want to stare at it for a while...* Also, the drawing style is reminiscent of the Hernandez Brothers' comic series *Love and Rockets*. I like it a lot. I hope I get to see more of this Danny Martin's stuff.
(JD)
Danny Martin / 623 E. 4th St. / Tucson, AZ 85705
bullmooseallstar@yahoo.com

REPERCUSION /$?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs – Spanish
This zine is killer, even with my limited knowledge of the Spanish language. It's a zine that some of the dudes from DESTINO FINAL from Spain put together after their latest tour to Japan. It's basically a huge Japanese scene report in zine format, with descriptions of a bunch of the bands they got to see and their impressions of Japanese punk culture. They write about seeing GAUZE and the ways in which respect for elders carries through to punk from normal society. They talk about how the sound at shows is completely perfect and that punk is almost entirely separated from politics in a way that is foreign to the squatting anarchist punks of Spain. Among the bands they write about are FRAMTID, D.S.B., CONTRAST ATTITUDE, D-CLONE, LAST SENTENCE, and END OF POLLUTION, the latter two of which were the only bands they saw with women. This is an awesome zine if you want to figure out what is going on in Japan and keep up with the tremendous number of rad new bands that seem to pop up every day over there. (DA)
(No contact info...Destino Final?)

SO NAILS #2 & #3 – free or trade
7 x 8.5 – copied – 12pgs and 16 pgs respectively
Hawaii based DIY goodness. They keep it real, with right on rants about the corporate (read: beer companies) sponsorship of fests, calls to action, general encouragement to participate in the scene. In issue 3 everything is brought to you by the letter M. There's interviews with the Miltons, Moth Guts, Mean and Ugly Guys, Muka Valley Blast Test, and some zine reviews. Issue two is not just entirely covering the punk happenings—they cover local venues, critique the corporate attitude of an activist crew of musicians, painters, DJs, and models loosely organized as Ground Up (seeming to make the editors a little more dedicated to political work and activism themselves) interview Wadge (one man grindnoise band with songs about pre-colonial Hawaii), and a funny little spoof on how hardcore is turning into a trendy mess with Christians taking over. Reading this makes me feel all fuzzy inside, like I know I would like to kick it with these peeps and talk some shit together. I would definitely recommend checking this shit out, especially since it is free, and will keep my eye on it. Send a trade! Wish it were a little longer...(JB)
Myspace.com/sonailshi
or brainsandhands@yahoo.com

THIS ISN'T HEAVEN, THIS SUCKS #5 / ?
11.75 x 8.25 – copied – 4pgs – French
This nifty zine/newsletter is only four pgs, but some cool items make up for the small quantity. On the first page is a little article about how zombie movies throughout the last few decades have often been commentaries on the larger current zeitgeist when they were made; oddly, some pictures from zombie films are accompanied by a couple of great live shots of the mighty DSB from Japan! The editor also puts together a playlist of just about every punk song ever written about zombies. The rest of the newsletter consists primarily of zine and record reviews, plus a short write up on one of my favorite bands of the '80s, the Freeze. I'm pretty sure this title usually has more pgs so I'm curious as to what the rush was to produce a four pager instead of creating a larger issue. Still, a fun little read for French speaking punks! (BG)
David Gonzalez / 19 rue du Pariou / 63170 Aubiere / FRANCE / dvdgnzlz@hotmail.com

TRAINWRECK #5 / 1$ or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
Maybe I am too nice? I tend to read most folks' zines with sensitivity toward the effort. If the diction is intact and the voice is not completely ignorant, then I generally choose to offer proper respect. Agreeing with content comes down to personal taste of course, and the judgments that I form are generally based upon what the writer has chosen to divulge. In this case I find it difficult not judge harshly on criteria that is quite possibly unfair, but tuff titties! *Trainwreck* just comes off as another one of *those privileged punk travels Europe and the states, goes to shows, buys records, self negates and writes about it* zines. He is not a bad person, but I have this suspicion that said punk has no concept of finance if you know what I mean. I am deducing that a mommy and a daddy paid for it all; after the attempt at college, which they also paid for, didn't work out—and that grosses me out. There is nothing bad about the writing style, but I just don't get into reading these tales without a little more of a connection to the writer. Perhaps he is your homeboy? (DS)
Dave Brainwreck / 74 Dwight St #2 / New Haven, CT 06511
moshforjesus@gmail.com

TRAINWRECK #6 / 2$ or trade
5.5 x 6 (7") – copied – 20 pgs
This is actually a bit cleverer and had I not formed the opinions stated in a separate review of *Trainwreck* #5 (see above) I would probably be more of a fan. The "shortcomings" issue, which this is, is sweet and even made me laugh a few times. The writer is living at home again and helping to care for his disabled brother and their relationship seems truly special, no pun intended. He is passing off this zine as his imaginary band endeavor, so it's referred to as a 7" instead. That is sorta cute, right? (DS)
Dave Brainwreck / 74 Dwight St #2 / New Haven, CT 06511
moshforjesus@gmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #96/97 / $3.25
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 64 pgs
This is the 17th anniversary issue. Double issue. Interviews with disaster strikes and we are hex, lots of show reviews and record reviews. Some article snippets from the TTWN archives. Entertaining enough, and it's been coming out since 1992. (MM)
PO BOX 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444

TURNING THE TIDE Volume 22 Number 4 / free
12 x 18 – printed – 8 pgs
Another issue of this long-running Southern California-based Anti-Racist Action newspaper, with the usual reports and updates. This features pieces on white nationalism (anti), Puerto Rican nationalism (pro), boycotts (pro), racism (anti)... you get the idea. Lots of stuff of interest to uncritical leftists and activists. This is so far removed from where I'm at that it's difficult for me to see how the people printing it see it as useful or necessary. Send them some postage for a copy. (VX)
Anti-Racist Action-LA/People Against Racist Terror / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232
www.antiracistaction.us
antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com

URINAL GUM VOL. 9 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 44 pgs
This zine was boring. I don't even know what I was reading—it was like a pointless blog in print form, if that makes sense. If you don't get out of the house much, then maybe you'll find something worthwhile in *Urinal Gum*, but I'd like the fifteen minutes I spent reading it back with interest. (CI)
James / PO Box 1243 / Eugene, OR 97440
www.urinalgum.com

VIOLIN OUTBREAK #16 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
I started reading *Violin Outbreak* as I would any other zine; I flipped through the pgs till I found things that caught my eye, and once I read those things I flipped through again. The whole time I kept thinking, "This really has the feel and approach of a classic punk zine." Then I noticed the back issues blurb on the first page, which taught me that *Violin Outbreak's* started in 1981. In fact, this is the first issue in over ten years! Well, I'm glad Tony's decided to do another edition, because I've enjoyed the multiple flip-throughs I've had with this. Tony's included lots of fun, random relics in these pgs. There's an interview with Imaginary Icons, lots of show reviews, a couple record and CD reviews, some comics, and a NY scene report. Seems standard, but it's pieced together in a casual manner with a bunch of blurbs scattered around. (CI)
Tony Arena / PO Box 1502 / Old Chelsea Station / New York, NY 10113

WET CEMENT #1 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Oh the inaugural issues, how I've come to dread them. For all the world *Wet Cement* seemed likely to meet the same fate of terrible writing, clichéd graphics and reproduced art until I opened it up to realize that it's actually quite a good zine. Jeff has collected a nice group of stories here ranging from a marriage for the sake of playing a show, to an almost fight at a bar to a celebration of cast iron cookware. Diverse writing and diverse writers create a very readable and interesting zine with an aesthetic that does not fail. If this level can be maintained, *Wet Cement* could become one of the better zines out there and answer back in the losing battle of zines vs. blogs. Hooray! (CR)
Jeff / 56 Franklin St. / Allston, MA 02134
jeff@skitsystem.net

ZARATA 2006/2007/2008/2009 / 3.5 Euro each
12 x 9 – printed –various pgs – Spanish/Euskara
What we have here are four copies of this political, anti-fascist street punk and Oi! Zine, from the Basque Country. The zines date back to 2006, and seem to come out once a year. Each features interviews with mostly bands from this subculture's early years, like Sham 69, Angelic Upstarts, Members, 999... All of the issues are packed with interviews, which are very extensive and in-depth. The 4th and latest issue is almost like a book, and details the history of Oi! in the Basque region. At any rate, if you are a Spanish speakin' street punk, this will be right up your alley. They look great! (LG)
kaskamotzak@hotmail.com

dec-jan/nine two four gilman

Fri, December 11
Everything Goes Cold
TBA

Sat, December 12
Sahn Maru • Embers

Fri, December 18
Ceremony • Skin Like Iron
Pressure • Punch • Hudson
Criminal

Sat, December 20
Velvet Teen • Remainders
Litany For The Whale
Remainders • Build Us
Airplanes • Cannons and
Clouds

Fri, December 25-27
Gilman Benefit Weekend

Sat, January 2
Ska Night

Sun, January 3rd
Harms Way

Fri, January 8th
Sabertooth Zombie
Grace Alley
Skin Like Iron

Sun, January 10th
Mohoram Atta (reunion)

Fri, January 15th
Grass Widow

Sat, January 16th
Hope Conspiracy
Lewd Acts • Never Healed
Touche Amore • Nails

Sun, January 17th
New Earth Creeps

Sat, January 23rd
Younger Lovers

Fri, January 29th
Cruel Hand • Bracewar
Mother of Mercy
Crucified • Sacred

Sat, February 6th
Angry Samoans • Dr. Know
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